

# *The* ARMENIAN REVIEW

## AUTUMN, 1948

In Soviet Erivan

By

H. Gerounian

In the Land of the Armenians

By

Werner Schmidt

also

H. Kurdian

Mrs. Stella S. Rustigian

Reuben Darbinian

Simon Vratzian

and others;

and

Translations

of Yeroukhan, Aharonian,  
Raffi, Isahakian, Hamasdegh

Conclusion of Brussov's

"Poetry of Armenia"

Poetry, Defense of Van, Book Reviews

Volume One, Number Four

# THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

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*The* **ARMENIAN** **REVIEW**

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AUTUMN, 1948

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Illustrations to the Stella S. Rustigian  
article on Armenian art by the authoress.



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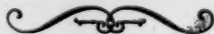
## IN SOVIET ERIVAN

By H. GEROUNIAN

(Translated by James G. Mandalian)



For twenty-eight years Armenian communists and their fellow-travelers have hailed the Soviet as the "liberators of the Armenian people." They have glibly dismissed the initial inexcusable and wholly unnecessary Soviet excesses as the inevitable concomitant of all revolutions. How unnecessary and inexcusable these crimes were is shown by this vivid narrative by one who was on the spot at the time, and saw with his own eyes the things which he has recorded. Gerounian (penname) was a member of the so-called Communist "Student's Brigade" of Armenia and personally witnessed the ruthless Communist persecutions which he related in his article, "Armenia Under the Soviet Rule," published in the Summer issue of the Armenian Review. In his second story the reader can see for himself how ripe Armenia was for the "workingman's revolution" in 1920, and how ridiculously tenuous is the analogy between the destruction of the French aristocracy and the extermination of the innocent Armenian peasantry.



It was a dark cloudy morning. The thick rolling billows of the November fog, like nocturnal caravans, were slowly engulfing the hills which surrounded the city below, and bathing the distant valley of Ararat. The leaden sky, formidable and perennially mournful, hung heavily over the house tops. The crystal-shaped particles of the fog, like ever-flowing tear drops, quivered on the bare limbs of the trees, and every time there was a light breeze, swayed and fell down in showers of pearl.

The streets were crowded with passers by, all sad and with heads bent low who, persecuted by the cares of the day and sensational surprises, were hastening on to their work. As usual, the bakeries were crowded to the limit. The militia to preserve the order (the policemen), kept a vigilant eye over the crowd, grabbing some by the collar and dragging them to the rear of the queue, or at times, with or without any cause, slapping or kicking them. Those who were hastening to work desperately tried to

buy their loaf of bread, but to no avail; they had to wait until noon at the least. A few moments' tardiness from work, on the other hand, was a question of life and death. The other stores were not yet open. And yet even before daybreak, this huge crowd had formed a queue in front of the doors in order to buy only one thing.

I was hurrying. Having passed several streets, I directed my steps toward the central prison. Araxy had told me that, no matter what, she was determined to join the queue in front of the prison this night in order to get some definite news of her brother Vardan. I was supposed to lend her the necessary assistance.

A considerable way off the prison, one could hear the dull and confused drone of the milling crowd. The central prison itself was a huge building surrounded by tall, monotonous, forbidding walls. From this side of the wall could be seen the top story with its somber, shut windows, giving it the appearance of a huge enchanted castle, inaccessible and forbidding. A rugged paved pathway joined the gray prison to the opposite street, and adjoining this pathway was a wide open space, muddy, and spotted with pools of stagnant water. On this square was a motley crowd of old men, children, women and girls. They all had come to get some word of their lost loved ones. Anxious and terror-stricken, they rolled and writhed there in the welter of their sorrow and anguish.

The enchanted castle, like a great temple of heathen gods, was in its glory. Around it each day gathered countless women and children, tearful and anguished young brides and girls, and doddering, melancholy grandfathers and grandmothers, bent low by the weight of years, leaning on their sticks. They came from the city and the suburbs, from the far provinces, from the villages and towns. They came each day to pray and to petition for some reassuring bit of news of their lost loved ones.

The women from the villages wore color-

ful and ageless costumes. Some were girded around the waist with a colorful sash or a piece of sackcloth, holding a patched bag of cloth or plaited reed; others were empty-handed and half-naked. The city folk were more up to date in their dress, holding in their hands faded handbags or threadbare knapsacks. Many were without coats, bare-legged, and with worn-out shoes. And others were wrapped up in rags, with dangling shreds, disheveled and barefoot. Many wore a piece of sackcloth around the waist for a blouse. And some of them had a few babies, with blue hands and withered cheeks, clinging to their skirts. Tallow-faced from sleeplessness, weary and exhausted by endless stupid wanderings, they could scarcely move in the vast, milling current. Some of them had traveled over long and tedious roads on foot for days and nights, without funds, and without any means of subsistence. And now, weeks had passed and still they had learned nothing.

They had come from the villages far and near, and were assembled there as fellow-sufferers or kin of ill fortune. Every one of them had lost some loved one, the pillar of the hearth, the bread winner of the family. All the prisoners were accused as "enemies of the people," "counter-revolutionaries," or such dreadful resounding crimes. These "enemies of the people" and the "counter-revolutionaries" only yesterday were workers and the peasants who had joyfully welcomed the Soviet "liberators" and their new order. Even at the moment, the newspapers were full of articles and proclamations, announcing the new era of freedom and prosperity of the workingman and the peasant. But the grim reality had already shattered the barriers of that fraud. The grisly truth, with its countless and unconscionable crimes, ran berserk. Shattered were those dream castles and fortresses. Alas, the fate of every one now lay in the hands of blind fortune.

\* \* \* \*

For a moment I stood there hesitant and confused, surveying my surroundings and murmuring to myself, "What is the meaning of all this?" I was thunderstruck from terror. For a long time I could not concentrate my mind. My thoughts carried me far, far away. Books, speeches, and resplendent dreams . . . "The only fatherland of the workingman is building a classless world, a social order in which man is the master of his labor, his will and his aspirations, where no man can rule over another, where only freedom and prosperity reign, and where the souls of men are thrilled in an Edenic world". And here was the grave which Labor itself had dug for itself; here were the chains which were being forged for helpless mankind . . .

Instinctively I approached a group of women who had surrounded a little girl. The latter was sobbing and crying convulsively. Standing still, I watched the scene for a moment. All the assembled women were bewailing, with sighs of *Akh* and *Vakh!* The little girl kept sobbing and crying, and wetting her bloodless blue hands with her tears.

—Why are you crying, my sweet?—I could no longer restrain the surgings of my heart.

—What else can the poor child do but cry?—put in an aged woman, as she took the hem of her apron to her eyes.

—Don't cry—I said—Have you lost your mother? Come, I will help you find her—and stepping closer I patted her ravelled curls.

It seemed the helpless child felt a comforting warmth by the touch of my hand, and raising her beseeching eyes to me, she searched me for a moment, then dropped her eyes and was silent again. She was not crying now, but trembling from the boundless pain of her heart; she was silently sobbing, shaking bodily every so often. This

kept up for a few moments. I was gazing at an innocent victim at sight of which the most stony heart would have been touched. And the more I looked, the more my heart was filled with hatred, revenge, and bitterness.

The women around us slowly dissolved into the surging sea of the crowd and we two were left alone, standing there.

—What's your name, little girl? I asked her, again caressing her hair.

—Seda, she murmured, without raising her eyes.

—Now, little Seda, tell me everything. Why have you come here?

—They've taken away my father, she stammered, and again started to sob.

—There, there, Seda. You're a big girl now. Tell me, whom did you come with? Your mother?—I persisted, as I saw she continued her sobbing.

—No. After they took my father away, my mother got sick. They buried her two days ago—and here she burst into tears.

Now everything was plain to me in all its hideous reality. I stood there petrified, searching my surroundings, as if looking for some ray of light, for some way out of this Tartarus. I was filled with a vague feeling which pressed heavily on me, and persecuted me with a formidable relentlessness. I felt myself powerless to resist that pressure. All the ways of hope seemed closed before me. I did not know what to do, how to comfort, with what words to console the heart of this budding, ravished child.

Automatically holding her by the hand, I started to move in the direction of the prison where the crowd was slowly mounting. Yonder, under the wall was a young woman who had fallen prostrate, exhausted, pale and sapped of all strength. On her right and left, standing like guards of honor, were her two half-naked babies, shivering in the cold. The skin of their faces and palms of the hand had turned blue and callous, while their eyes, sunk deep in their sockets, gazed frostily on the shocking

reality which surrounded them.

—She must be a beggar—I thought for a moment. But, alas, she too was the victim of the same travesty which had blasted the lives of countless others.

—Why are you sitting in that mud, little sister?—I asked her compassionately.

—What else can I do, brother dear? There's no more strength left in my legs. I've been dragging on for three days, with no sleep nor rest. Would that God would take my soul, so I would be rid of this hell. And raising her eyes to heaven, she murmured some other things which I understood not. Tears flowed copiously, wetting her pale, boney cheeks.

—And who is your prisoner?

—My husband. I've had no news of him since they took him away two months ago.

—Why did they take him away?

—How should I know? It was midnight. They called on us, called him out, and he never came in. I went up stairs, picked his clothes and handed them to him. They locked him in the car and took him away.

—Didn't you ask them for what crime of his they were taking him away?

—Who could ask any questions? He was a shoe maker. Why should they imprison shoe makers?

What could I say? What else would the Bolsheviks advance as an excuse for arresting people unless in the name of "peoples' enemies," or "counter-revolutionaries?" Without uttering a word, I walked away.

\* \* \*

Flashing out of the opposite street, two black trucks were dashing toward the prison building. Piercing through the crowd, they came to a stop in front of the building and let out a shrill siren. They were the usual prison trucks, perfected according to the new system. They were bolstered on all four sides by heavy iron bars. Not a passageway nor a window. A similar door of solid structure completed the rear.

—They're bringing in new prisoners—the word was spread, and in an instant the whole crowd surrounded the trucks. Where did they come from? Who were these mis-erables? No one knew.

—Is Artash from Vagharshapat here, let him speak up.

—Is Hamo of Giumri here?

—Is that one Aram of Ghamarlu?

And countless such questions were showered on all sides, but all to no avail. Not an echo, not an answer. The twin massive gates of the prison opened with a heavy creak, and in an instant all the new victims of Bolshevism were swallowed up. In vain did the crowd try to see something. Yonder were the towering walls, and that was all.

The arrival and departure of the trucks was accelerated. They all came in loaded with prisoners and departed empty. They departed in different directions, to stack up new loads, and to hunt down new shoe makers and farmers who should be sacrificed to the Socialist fatherland! Presently a company of the Soviet police emerged from the adjoining guard house and led the people in orderly fashion to an open window of the prison building which bore the sign "Information Department." There was no time to lose now and I hurried from row to row, from company to company, to find Araxy. The queues were so packed and so winding that it was difficult to locate any one. Consequently, I was obliged to make the rounds several times, always being persecuted by the militia. Finally, I espied Araxy's head, her face pale and terror-stricken, almost being crushed against the wall by the milling crowd.

—Why so late?—asked Araxy.

—Can't you see?—I asked her, pointing to the crowd—Is it an easy thing to locate one in this crowd?

—Who's that?—Araxy asked, seeing Seda.

—A poor helpless child. Her father is in the prison and she is looking for some news of him.

—Poor child. What can she do in this crowd?—Then Araxy turned to the child and asked—Why have you come alone? Was your mother busy?

—My mother—Seda stammered, and began to cry.

I started to explain, but Araxy, thinking Seda's mother had died near the prison, and loath to hear the conclusion, exclaimed: "You don't need to tell me more. I've seen everything with my own eyes, everything. Oh, it's terrible."

Taken wholly aback, I asked: "What have you seen, Araxy?"

—Corpses. And do you know in what misery they died?

—I don't understand—I interrupted—What are you talking about? Where? Speak plainly so I can understand.

—Where? I'm not talking about China. I'm talking about here, right here where we are standing.

—How? When?—I persisted eagerly.

—When? Today. Early before dawn this morning two nurses and some militiamen came out of the prison and making the rounds, collected the corpses in stretchers and carried them inside the prison.

—What? They took the corpses into the prison?—I asked in astonishment.

—Yes, they don't remove the corpses any more.

—Do they bury the corpses inside the prison?

—No, they cremate them, and utilize the ashes.

What a pass we have come to, what all these scoundrels have done to us!—I growled in my fury, gnashing my teeth.

—Don't get excited—Araxy warned me, and turning to Seda, she asked:

—Do you know your father's name?

—Yes, stammered Seda.

Araxy took out pencil and paper and put down Seda's father's name, the surname, the home town, and the dates.

—Haven't they started yet?—I asked.

—No, they'll start at 11:30. We've still got half an hour.

—I don't think your turn will come today, Araxy. See this crowd ahead of you? You should have come much earlier.

—I've been here since two o'clock after midnight. Do you see this seething crowd? It was the same thing all night. I'm lucky to have fallen in line. There are men here who have been waiting for days and still cannot join the queue.

—Araxy, you look very tired. Go get some rest while I take your place.

—There's no need of that. Can't you see what's going on around you? You must be careful not to attract their notice. Don't you see only the women are in this queue?

Araxy's answer aroused an unusual doubt in me. I looked around me for a moment and, to be sure, there were a few suspicious looking men mingling with the crowd, approaching the striking-looking women and girls and asking them embarrassing questions, sometimes jotting down their names and addresses. What for? No one knew. One of these strangers approached us and in a very low voice asked Araxy whom she had in the prison and why he had been imprisoned. Then, seeing I was listening, he asked me, "and what are you waiting for? Have you, too, got some one in the prison, or are you just . . ."

—Ah—uh—No.—I stammered, and while he sized me up from head to foot, suddenly remembering Seda, I said: "She's a helpless child, I wanted to help her."

—And who is her father? Do you know?—he asked sarcastically, looking directly into my eyes.

—No—I answered sharply.

—Of course not. I've known the likes of you long ago, my friend—and turning to Araxy—Good bye, he said and went away.

• • • • •

The hours passed and we were getting closer and closer to the Information window.

—Pardon me, but could you tell me what



time it is? —The speaker was a well-dressed woman, waiting in line just ahead of us.

—Quarter to two—replied Araxy.

—Thank you,—and the lady turned around toward the information window.

But I was curious to know why she was here.

—Pardon me, Madame, whom do you have in the prison?

—My husband.

—What for?

She turned around and with a searching look surveyed me from head to foot, then being convinced of my sincerity, she said in a low voice:

—Do they ask the whys and the wherefores any more?

—How not? They must accuse him of something.

—They won't accuse him of anything. They just order him. The prisoner himself must "confess" his "counter-revolutionary" activity.

—But when there's no such activity?

—Whether there is or not, it's all the same. He is obliged to offer some guilt.

—That's impossible in my opinion.

—Don't be surprised. I too had such notions but the facts are implacable. My husband has been imprisoned for two years. He is not guilty of anything definite. On the other hand, he does not want to trump up an artificial crime. So, the examination continues, I don't know how long.

—Do they permit visits?

—No. My brother who accompanied my husband told me that, sick and tired of these perpetual examinations and tortures, my husband has decided to trump up some sort of crime just to make an end of the nightmare.

—It's terrible, terrible,—exclaimed Araxy, shaking her head.

—And where is your brother now? —I asked her.

—He has been sentenced to five years exile in Solovky, in the Arctic Ocean. We

saw him just before his departure and we heard many unexpected and unbelievable things.

We were quite close to the window by now. The window which we confronted was a small square aperture, fortified with iron bars. Inside, seated at a table, was a bald-headed military who was fingering the thick folds of a black volume.

—Architect Grigorian from Yerevan,—the lady said in a suppressed voice, approaching the window.

The bald-headed "military" fingered the pages of the book a few times, wet his finger on his moist lip, surveyed each page critically, and finally, stopping at a page, arose and asked the woman in a frozen voice:

—What relation are you of his, Madame?

—He is my husband.

—It's too bad that you've been tied to that scoundrel,—prated the man and again started to peer at the page.

—How so?—asked the astonished woman.

—Can you go home with an easy conscience, Madame?

—But what news of my husband?—the woman persisted as if shocked.

—Your husband has been shot as an enemy of the people.

Each word was like a bomb shell to the poor woman.

—What are you saying? What for?—shouted the woman from sheer indignation, pressing her head to the window.

She could not believe her ears, as if the answer had come from the outside, and not the inside. The man repeated the words, this time enunciating them one by one. It was a heart-rending sight. For an instant the woman turned pale and her eyes were filled with tears. She looked around her in desperation and scarcely stammered, "My God, my God!" She took a few unsteady steps, swayed, and collapsed in a heap.

—Water, water,—voices were heard on all sides.

They sprinkled some cold water on her

face until she came to. I rushed to her side and supported her with a few comforting words, but she was indifferent to my consolation. "My God, my God," she kept repeating.

Araxy, Seda and I moved on to the opposite street. Fearful lest we were seen together, here Araxy bade me good bye, leaving me with Seda. I left Seda with her town folk at the gate of the prison and went on my way.

\* \* \*

It was evening. The autumn wind was whistling through the streets and the telegraph posts were humming a monotonous melody, much like a funeral dirge. The skies were clear of all clouds. On the distant horizon a few of the feathered tribe were floating in the infinity of the blue. In front of the cashier's box of the circus stood a few urchins, wrapped up in rags. They had to wait for long hours to buy cheaper tickets which they could resell at a profit. Shivering from the cold, they cuddled there and kept pounding the ground with their feet. Near the City Park, at Abovian Square, the radio loud speaker was broadcasting while the people gathered to hear the latest news.

"*England*—The strikers are demanding an eight hour day and sufficient food for the workers.

"*America*—In the suburbs of New York families of unemployed workers are being ejected from their homes. Thousands of children under the open skies are dying from hunger and misery.

"*Italy*—The Fascist dictators are stifling in blood every emancipatory move. The prisons are overflowing with innocent people.

"*France*—Three million unemployed are suffering in the throes of hunger.

"The Committee to Aid International Revolutionaries has issued a call to the workingmen of the world to hasten to the aid of their comrades now being incarcerated in jails of capitalistic countries.

"The workers of Leningrad have passed a resolution to donate one day's earnings to the unemployed of France.

"The Caucasian peoples have joyfully welcomed collectivization."

Discontented and sullen, the crowd dispersed, each going to his home. In a half-dark corner was seated the blind minstrel who swelled the hearts of the passers by with the warble of his flute. Beside him was a small tin box in which the passers deposited their metallic mites, and whose pleasing jingle enlivened the minstrel to greater heights. The scanty lanterns hanging in the streets were swaying in the light wind, taking into their motion the milky emptiness which was perceptible in the darkness of the night.

I was still in the park, seated on a bench which was elongated in the shadow. I rose to my feet and kept on my way. Since morning I had tasted nothing and was weary on my feet. There was no one now in the park. The streets were empty. Lighting a cigarette I headed for the Abovian Street. Two surreptitious eyes were following me . . .



# PAROUNAK HOLDS UP A CARAVAN

By AVETIK ISAHAKIAN

(Translated by James G. Mandalian)

There was not a soul in Karin (Erzroum), Armenian or Turk, who did not know Parounak. He was notorious not only because he came from a rich family from the mother's side, but because he was known as a happy-go-lucky fellow, an incurable drinker, an open-handed, open-hearted, devil-may-care type of a fool. He would begin the day in some tavern, and then would make the rounds until he had taken in the last barroom. In his sober moments, he whiled away the time in gambling. In these drinking and gambling orgies, his companions were the Armenian and Turkish tough guys. Many a time, he had slugged it out with his Turkish companions for the sake of his "religion", but invariably he had made it up with them, because *Raki*\* and poker were more powerful factors in the reconciliation of hostile religions than the crescent and the cross which promoted these brawls.

At times, Parounak would stay away from home for days and weeks while his mother pined away from loneliness. He was the only son of the poor widow who kept complaining, "This rascal of mine is incorrigible, has no stomach for work, will not marry and settle down, and keep the family hearth burning so we won't be obliged to knock the doors of the others in our old age."

---

\*Raki is a strong oriental whiskey distilled from grapes.

She kept uttering these words day and night, as she turned from one shrine to another importuning the saints to knock some sense into her prodigal son. Parounak returned home only when he was broke and his credit was on the rocks. In such moments he would slink in with a sad, downcast face, obviously penitent, with nary a word in answer to his mother's reproaches and tears, as if he were one of the slabs of the front door pavement on which he sat, silent and morose, smoking endlessly.

—You've no pity on me, no pity on yourself; you could at least think of the honor of your cousins. Because of you, they've become a laughing stock of even the riff-raff of the town.

Every time the poor woman concluded her importunities with these words. Then her maternal heart would relent. She would cook the most delicious dishes for her prodigal son who was still the pupil of her eye, would mend his clothes, and trim him from head to foot. And Parounak, in turn, would return to his old trade. Seeing he was always playing hookey from school, his cousins took him in their business, but seeing he had no bent for business, they finally decided to teach him a trade, so that, in case he lost his paternal heritage, he might not become a total destitute. They apprenticed him to a master craftsman, and in time he became a shoemaker, until the demon of wine again entered his belly, and



leaving his shop, he rejoined the thieving, bumming, drinking and gambling hoodlums of the town.

The toughies were well versed in the fine art of hold-ups,—the hijackers, the con-men, and the handlers of the hot stuff. But Parounak never stooped to sharing the loot. As a result, he was often broke, but he made this a point of boasting, that "he always ate his own bread," especially when his tipsy companions bragged about their dubious nobility.

Thus, having obviously undergone a temporary reform, Parnounak devoted his time to his trade, came home early in the evenings, had dinner with his mother, and then, as was the custom in Karin, the two went visiting some relative, most frequently his cousins. Hope sprung anew in the heart of Parounak's mother as she saw her dreams on the way to realization. She visualized herself surrounded by her grandchildren, scampering around her, gay and happy, and enlivening the place with their delightful, childish chatter. And presently, Parounak would dash all these dreams on the rock by suddenly closing his shop and heading for the first barroom.

On Ash Saturday of Lent, as Parounak was seated in a corner of the barroom, he heard the timorous ringing of the bells of the Armenian church. The melancholy melodies revived in him the memory of the glowing olden days, just like those red Easter eggs, when as a child, holding his father's hand, he went to church. He recalled those moments when the priest solemnly pronounced the words, "Take, eat, this is my body," how his father would take the red egg from his pocket, and scarcely half-peeled, would eat it. After the ceremony, the two would return to the home which was now filled with the sweet odor of freshly fried fish.

A surging, overpowering emotion welled up in the heart of Parounak. His eyes moistened. He had an irresistible urge to

go to church. He went home, washed and dressed, and like a devout Christian, he headed straightway for the church. There, he took his station in the women's section so his mother could see him and be happy. Who knows? perhaps she would accompany him home for the breaking of the Fast!

He stood there, drinking in the divine liturgy. For an instant, he wanted to turn around and see if his mother had noticed him. He let his eyes wander all around, and suddenly, and quite involuntarily, they came to rest on a beautiful, lovely girl who was standing beside her mother. "She looks the picture of a saint," Parounak thought in his heart, and kept staring at her until the girl, as if hypnotized, turned around and looked at him for a flitting instant. Something unseen from the girl's eyes pierced the depths of Parounak's heart, stirred it, and turned it upside down, depositing in its recesses an unseen, unheard, sweet flavor and scent, a light and fire . . .

An unrecognizable tremor passed through the living body of Parounak. He saw that the church was empty now, the congregation had disappeared, the mass and liturgy were over, except for the saintlike girl surrounded by tall lit candles and the sweet scent of the incense, while he himself was kneeling at her feet, his lips closed.

How long he remained in this condition he did not know. He was so enthralled that had they cut him in twain he would not have felt it. When suddenly the congregation made for the door, Parounak came out of his trance. The church was now really empty, and the saintlike girl was in the street, walking beside her mother.

Like a shadow, Parounak stalked them from a distance, having completely forgotten to look up his mother and to comfort that poor woman on this festal day. Mother and daughter entered the home, and Parounak recognized them. "Aha, now I know, she is the daughter of Hakop Agha. She looked so much like a saint," he mused,

endlessly repeating, and deriving sweet comfort from the words.

He stood there for a moment, his eyes fixed on Hakop Agha's door, in the secret hope of a break, that somehow the girl would come into view, but to no avail. He took two reluctant steps and again came to a halt. His heart was nailed to the threshold of that enchanting house. How could he go away from there? Where could he go? Suddenly a ray of hope illuminated his floundering soul. "If my cousins speak for me, Hakop Agha will not refuse his daughter to me," he thought. "Who else, besides myself, could be worthy of her hand? Akh! If he only gave her to me, I'll never again taste a drop of Raki; I'll never again look at another barroom. I will join the firm of my cousins, I will become rich, and will keep my fiancée worthy of a king's wife. I give my pledge."

This thought was felt and uttered in such a firm faith that Parounak was really convinced now that Hakop Agha's daughter was as good as his. And, fortified with this conviction, gay and light-hearted, and almost running, he flew to the nearest barroom to celebrate the event.

\* \* \*

From Easter day until Green Sunday Parounak tore apart Hakop Agha's threshold and roof but never caught sight of his beloved. The most he could accomplish, was to learn the girl's name from a neighboring woman. "Siranoush" was the name! Siranoush, the saintlike girl! The name trembled on his lips a thousand times. Siranoush. What a sweet name! How becoming to her, how like her!

Fired by the intensity of his love, he could not stand without sharing his secret with another. He felt an irresistible urge to tell it to someone, but this someone had to be his dearest and most intimate friend. Finally he decided that Buzant was this boon companion. Buzant was his childhood

playmate, and now his side-kick in his drinking bouts. Sunday evening, as he was seated in a dark corner of his barroom, he turned to his companion Buzant:

Buzant *Jan*, my heart, my soul,—he said,—do you know how much I want it? More than my own brother. All right, all right, let's say I've no brother, but you are that brother to me. Look at me, brother, you are my brother. It's no use braying over the saddle bag of another. We two are born of women, we too have hearts, we too love.

Buzant was listening, his mouth agape, without catching on.

—Why are you dumbfounded? Am I not right?

—You are right, big brother, you are right.

—Atta boy. Now you're talking. Let me spill it. To make a long story short, I'm in love with the daughter of Hakop Agha. This thing in here is not love, it's fire and flame. I'm being consumed by the fire.

—You mean Siranoush? I know her, she is my aunt's neighbor. She's a dream, Parounak *Jan*. 'Tis well worth it, well worth,—then, lending his voice a mysterious accent, he added softly—she's one in a million, very rich, a veritable gold mine.

—I, too, am one in a million, Buzant *Jan*. We two will make a perfect match, eh, Buzant *Jan*?

—Let her be a sacrifice unto your soul. Parounak *Jan*, what have others got that you've not got? Roses drip from your cheeks, heh, big brother mine? Do the Pastourmajians know about this, your fat uncles?

—What uncles, what aunties? I haven't even breathed it to my mother. Do you see how precious is one's pal? Do you get it now? Let's drink another to our friendship.

Buzant's vanity was flattered by these words. He did not know how to answer.

—Buzant *Jan*, —continued Parounak, —let me be a sacrifice unto your soul. Look at me. I'll sprinkle you with silver and gold, if you will only have your aunt find out for me if Siranoush approves of me. This is the gist of the matter.

And without waiting for the answer, he ordered the bartender to bring some more raki and appetizers.

For a moment Buzant scratched his Adam's apple.

—I'll sell my soul to hell fire to accomplish it, but, —lowering his voice, —do you know Hakop Agha? He's a hot-headed cuss. He won't even let a tom cat cross his roof.

Buzant's promise was as good as if they had handed over the whole world to Parounak, so much so, he did not even hear the last words about Hakop Agha's nasty temper. The glasses were filled. After emptying several rounds to Siranoush's health, Parounak gave orders to set a larger table, and invited over his Armenian and Turkish pals. He ordered the musicians to play the tunes he loved most, especially a new love song which had come from Caucasus, and which, he thought, had been composed especially for Siranoush and him.

Parounak's pals rightly surmised that he was in love, so they drank round after round, toasting the while, "Congratulations, Parounak, *Jan*, may yours be a long and happy union, may you twain grow old on one pillow.\*

But Parounak took all this in a sort of mock humility, protesting jokingly,

—Oh, there's nothing certain yet. Hey there, Seto, you worm, may you be the next. And you, Ibish, you blind fool, may you

be the next.\*

However, with the exception of Buzant, no one knew Parounak's secret, no matter how much he drank.

As luck would have it, however, Buzant's venture struck a snag. His aunt's daughter had positively refused to act as a go-between for Parounak and Siranoush.\*\* She was convinced that a fellow like Parounak, who drank and gambled, did not stand a chance of even being hired as a servant in Hakop Agha's home, to say nothing of winning the hand of such a beautiful and refined girl as Siranoush. Like one who had received a crushing blow on the head, Buzant came to Parounak, and with endless stammerings and mumblings, gave him to understand that it had been impossible to contact Siranoush.

—That accursed father keeps his daughter in a bottle, —he said bitterly, —and that mother of hers is the stop cork. We'll have to be patient and keep plugging. Here's hoping the end will be good.

Buzant's words were like coals of fire on Parounak's head. Hearing them and dashing out of the saloon were a moment's work. He went straightway to his mother and told her the whole thing, ending his speech with,

—If they give me the girl, I have vowed never to touch another drop of raki. If they refuse, I will drench the four corners of the carpet with my drink, come what may.

His mother burst into a bitter chuckle, then turned on her son,

—You mean to tell me it's Hakop Agha's daughter? Couldn't you climb a little higher? You fool! You ought to be chained. For what virtue of yours, what good quality,

\* Twin beds and twin pillows being an unheard of thing in the old country, a married couple there slept on one long pillow. The expression, "May you grow old on one pillow," therefore, is a wish meaning, "May nothing mar the happiness of your union." — Tr.

\* "May you be the next" is an old country expression, meaning, "May your turn come next." — Tr.

\*\* Formerly, in the old country, all matches were arranged through the medium of intermediaries called "Go-betweens." — Tr.

will any one give you his daughter? I myself, if I had seven blind and lame daughters stacked up outside, I would not give you one of them. Loafing all year long, you give your salt to the dogs, and aside from your raki you recognize neither your mother nor your God.

Parounak turned deathly pale at his mother's words and leaned limply against the wall. Seeing she had mortally wounded her son, the mother was conscience-stricken and cut short her words. She lit the lamp, and rolling a cigarette, she spoke now in a more tender voice:

—My boy, you are not insane so I would say you are insane. Wherein are you wanting? In looks, you are a handsome youth. Come to your senses. Get rid of that dog's milk. Stop your drinking. The way it is, no one will give you his daughter in marriage. That's impossible. You get yourself a job, first earn your bread, and the rest is easy. I'll find you a girl better than Hakop Agha's daughter, do you understand? The key to the bazarre is the *Hazar* (the money). You can't start it any too soon. Cast aside that stone from your bosom. Open your shop tomorrow and sit there, one month, two months, one year, and I promise you I'll give you your heart's desire.

In a sense the mother was happy that her son had been caught in a trap, as if by some act of Providence, to straighten him out and to set him on the right track. The poor woman was thoroughly convinced in this matter and looked upon the whole development as an answer to her prayers. She prepared a good dinner for him, and taking advantage of the occasion, she exhorted him to set himself right, and that the remainder would be easy. Parounak listened to her silently and got to thinking. His head was in tense labor. He did not sleep all night. And early in the morning, slipping silently out of the house, he made his way to the nearest tavern, swallowed

two or three shots, and did not stop until he came to the house of Hakop Agha.

The blind of the second story window was lifted. The head of Siranoush came into view and instantly disappeared again. All this was like the flash of lightning to Parounak. His soul shook, his knees trembled, and a moment later the door opened. It was Siranoush's mother.

—Who are you? What do you want? — she asked.

—I . . . I . . . I'm the grandson of the Pastourmajians, Parounak is my name.

—Ah yes, I've heard of them. What do you want of us?

—I . . . *Ishdeh* . . . that is to say . . . *Khanoum* Mother, God knows, why should I keep my secret . . . I'm in love with your daughter. *Ishdeh* . . . that is to say I mean . . . I want you to . . .

He could not finish the sentence. Hakop Agha's wife's withering look had stopped him cold. With furious, flaming eyes, the woman was sizing up Parounak from head to foot.

—Go away, go, go on, *Haydeh!* You've come to the wrong door. *Haydeh.* —And she started to close the door on him, but Parounak held the door and firmly stood his ground.

—Go away, go on now, beat it. If Agha should know of this it will go bad for you.

—*Khanoum* mother, Milady, —Parounak was supplicating, —I shall die of this pain. Think well, you will be accountable in the Day of Judgment. God knows it, and Hakop Agha too may know that I have vowed never again to touch a drink, and that I will treat my fiancée like a king's wife.

—*Haydeh*, go away you, you're not the type to hold up a caravan.\*

—*Khanoum* mother, Milady, what if I should hold up a caravan?

\*This is an Armenian idiomatic expression meaning, "You'll never amount to anything" or, "You'll never become a man."

—Then come and see me. Now go, go away quick.

—Do you really mean it? *Khanoum* mother? Will you keep your promise?

—Yes, yes, yes, —and quickly the woman shut the door on Parounak.

After a few moments hesitation, Parounak regained his consciousness, and with swift strides went away.

\*\*\*

Seated at his customary corner in the tavern, drinking his raki, Parounak was in deep thought. He had taken the woman literally when she said he was not the type to hold up a caravan.

—To hold up a caravan is not as easy as eating Pilav. It is not a one man job. It takes fight and guts. It takes companions. They say the Persians who escort the caravans are faint-hearted men, but holding up a caravan is a tough job just the same.

Parounak was in the midst of these meditations when Buzant arrived.

—Greetings, big brother, why the sour puss? What has happened? Did somebody stop your donkey?

Buzant was a bit tipsy and in high spirits.

—Oh, nothing, Buzant *Jan*. I am not feeling very good.

—Let me be a sacrifice unto your soul,

—Buzant was affectionate and tender, —don't take it so hard. Come, let's play a game of backgammon, it will clear up your head.

But Parounak dismissed the proposal with a nervous wave of the hand. For a moment the two pals looked searchingly into each other's eyes, to pierce the inner thoughts. Finally, Parounak broke the silence:

—Buzant *Jan*, you eat bread. See, what you eat is not hay. He who steals a javelin must first find a place to hide it. Is that not so?

—I believe, I confess, —Buzant confirmed in a solemn voice.

And Parounak told the story of his meeting Siranoush's mother, and the imperative necessity of holding up a caravan.

Buzant scratched his Adam's apple, again he scratched it. His intoxicated mind could not make any head or tail of what Parounak was saying.

—Are you tongue-tied? Can't you say something? —Parounak shouted angrily.

—What shall I say? Come, let's go, there's nothing impossible.

—Where shall we go?

—Anywhere, wherever you want.

—Hang you, you tomato, haven't you any brains? Is holding up a caravan such an easy thing? We've got to think, we've got to weigh it, we've got to organize, — Parounak said, weighing, and laying a mysterious accent on each word.

—All right, all right, as you say, we'll think well.

The two pals retired on the same bench. In an instant Buzant was sound asleep. But Parounak stayed awake for a long time. Several times he jumped up with a start, as if shaken by the sweet ringing of the caravan bells in the far, far away desert, almost unprotected, and beckoning to him to come over and hold it up. He sat on his pillow, his ears tense, but all in vain. There was a deep silence in the night. Not a sound, outside or inside.

Sleeping with one eye, and wide awake with the other, Parounak passed a long heavy night. At day break they got up, had breakfast, and straightway headed for the nearest tavern in the outskirts of the city, to brace themselves, and to start reconnoitering the Persian caravans which traveled between Trebizond and Tabriz. Finally, climbing over the city walls, they started off on the highway. The loaded caravans, escorted by armed guards, were wending their way back and forth. When Parounak saw them his heart sank within him, —Who am I to hold up a caravan? —he said, —it just can't be done. —With



painful thoughts and deep concern he viewed the oncoming and disappearing caravans which it seemed, brought nearer and nearer his love and fortune, his life and happiness, only to take it away to far and unknown horizons.

Outside the city, they stopped to rest at a noted spring which is on the way to Kars. Buzant took out of his pocket the small bottle of raki and the two drank of it, meanwhile mapping out their plan of action. They decided that they would need two braves to assist them in the hold-up, and that the nights would be spent in reconnoitering. After draining the last drop, they got up and headed for the city.

It was past midday when they arrived in the city. Suddenly, in a deserted street near the Turkish fountains, they saw seven camels loaded with charcoal, kneeling and chewing the cud, with a solitary Persian keeping watch. The two companions looked into each other's eyes . . .

—Buzant, *Ishdeh*, here it is, *Ahan*, this is the caravan we've been looking for. It don't have to be loaded with gold, does it? A caravan is a caravan, no matter what. Come, let's drive it to the door of Hakop Agha.

—It's a Godsend, the cross a witness, —confirmed Buzant, —come, let's drive it in. Some good might come of this, who knows?

They wasted no more words. Parounak stepped forward and seized the reins of the first camel, shouting, "*Ghalkh*," "*Ghalkh*," Giddup, Giddup! But the camel spit foam and refused to get up. The young Persian guard, at first bewildered, could not understand what was going on. Under Buzant's blows the camels got up while Parounak took hold of the chain. The Persian tugged at the chain, trying to stop the camels, but when Buzant whacked him on the waist and hands with his stick, he left the camels and started to fight off Buzant. Meanwhile,

Parounak took the caravan and disappeared in the streets.

As Parounak was leading nonchalantly his caravan, the passers by thought he was taking home his cousins' charcoal, a very common thing in Karin, and thought nothing of it. He brought the caravan to a halt in front of Hakop Agha's door, then triumphantly knocked on the door. Hakop Agha's wife stuck her head out of the window.

—*Khanoum* mother, here's the caravan. Now will you honor your word?

Utterly flabbergasted, the woman did not know what to say. She gazed in wonder, now at Parounak, now at the camels. It was so funny that the kids of the street flocked up, to take in the show, while the young brides, peering from behind their latticed windows, giggled hilariously.

—*Khanoum* Mother, when do you want me to bring the engagement ring for Siranoush?

Suddenly, out of nowhere, two policemen took hold of Parounak and yanked him away, without paying any attention to his shouts and angry curses. Tall Persian guards retook their camels and led them away, gesturing menacingly at Parounak. They hauled Parounak to the police station where they confined him until evening. But *Vali Pasha*, the good Governor who was familiar with Parounak's pranks, sent for him and put him through the mill. When he heard his story, he chuckled, and with some fatherly advice never again to indulge in such pranks, he sent him home.

But Parounak was disgusted with the *Vali*. He felt that the *Vali* did not do him justice. Especially he was furious at Hakop Agha's wife for not having respected her word. After that event, he "drenched the four corners of the carpet" with his drink. He wanted to drown his sorrows in his drink.

—She gave me her word, her word, do you get that, boys? Sarkis *Jan*, Hasan

*Jan*, I was disgraced for the sake of my love. I became a common thief, a bandit, a hijacker of the caravans in front of *Vali Pasha*! That unconscionable would-be mother-in-law of mine . . . Ouf! Ah, what's the use. There's no justice in this world, no justice.

And, boiling over, he would strike the table with his fist, upsetting the cups of the *raki*, but his companions forgave him, because they understood the pain in his heart. And they tried to comfort him, saying:

—Come, Parounak, snap out of it. Be a man, a he-man. Is a man going to shed tears over a woman? What is a woman, after all? What does she amount to that her word will mean anything? You can't pour *Pilav* into a woman's water. Drink,

*Jan*, drink. Let's drown our sorrows in drink.

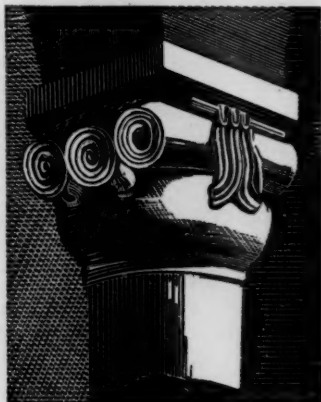
—I know, I know, —Parounak would say, —One can believe only one of a woman's forty words. But this pain of mine, Ah, I cannot stand it. God spare my worst enemy such a pain.

But this incident left a lasting impression on the history of the Armenian community of Karin. After that, whenever referring to a specific date of some event, Parounak's companions would say,

—This thing happened in the year when Parounak held up the caravan.

And with each reminder, the old wound in Parounak's heart would reopen.

—There's no justice, my *Jan*, no justice, —he would say painfully, —Justice is nothing but an empty word.



# IN THE LAND OF THE ARMENIANS

By WERNER SCHMIDT

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This chapter, a translation, is taken from Werner Schmidt's German work, *MEMOIRS OF A SLAVE*, a postwar story of the author's captivity and sufferings under Soviet rule and his eventual bid for freedom. The translation is made from the Armenian which appeared in August 22, 1948 issue of the *Hairenik Daily* of Boston.

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We had been at work for a long time as black workers. We had been reconciled to the inevitable and to drink, without complaint, the bitter cup, until one day they told us they were going to move us elsewhere.

—Probably it's Siberia for us,—remarked emaciated Hermann.

—What makes you think that? —I asked doubtfully.

—And there we shall find our final rest. There, death is inevitable; in our present condition, with our shattered health, bad food, and our almost naked bodies, we shall never be able to stand the rigors of Siberia.

We both were silent. The future looked gloomy and dark. They ordered us to pack up our belongings. A worn out, filth-infested blanket, a tin cup, a rusty platter for food, and a tattered bag which went for a suit case . . . these completed our effects.

It was past midnight when, led by guards who were armed with bayonets, and under their vigilant eye, we were whisked off to the station. Our journey lasted two hours. We were wading through marsh water and mire. Our foot gear which once upon a time passed for shoes, now threadbare and tied up with strings, could hardly obey our foot steps. It was dark, and there was a thin

drizzle. Our food supply for the trip consisted of one kilo of sandy bread, and 150 grams of pork fat. That should have sufficed for three days. Some of us had already consumed our rations, without giving any thought to the coming three days.

We waited for two hours at the station, huddling here on the wet, damp pavements. We had no right to move. They served us some hot water which was called tea, and I can say, I had never in my life tasted such a delicious tea. Finally they tucked us in some freight cars and locked the doors from the outside. There were 75 of us in each car. The freight train started. It was impossible either to lie or sit down. Hermann and I were snuggled in a corner. At another corner of the car there was a small hole which served for the demands of nature. Having forgotten all shame, we stood in line around that little hole. Soon after, a nauseating stench was choking us. The 75 inmates of the car derived their ventilation from a small window fastened with iron bars, scarcely 20 centimeters in length and 10 centimeters in height. Many slept standing, some leaned one against another. Hermann laid his head on my shoulder and went to sleep. That sleep cost him plenty because someone lifted



all his food supply.

After three or four hours (we had no time piece because all our watches had been seized) the train came to a stop, and another hour later we were permitted to step out. We all stretched ourselves on the ground, and many fell deep asleep, as if they were lying on feather beds. The guards, armed with automatic pistols, watched over us. Presently, the whistle blew and we again entered our prison. Where were they taking us? What country? What land? We did not know. The second day of our journey, when they again freed us from our confinement, there in the distance, etched on a blue canvas, we saw a majestic mountain which seemed to have grown right out of the ground. Swartz, who was a doctor of history and literature, suddenly exclaimed:

—We are now in Armenia.

—Armenia? —murmured they who had never heard the name.

—And that magnificent mountain is Ararat, the sacred mountain of the Armenians. Tradition has it that Noah's Ark rested here.

—Are the Armenians Christians or heathen? —asked Carl of Heidelberg, without shifting his eyes from Ararat.

—The Armenians are the oldest Christian people of the world and possess the greatest cultural heritage of any nation in Asia.

We gazed at Ararat with fascination while she, in turn, held us spell bound. But our conversation was brought to an abrupt end as we were tucked anew in our wagons. The train came to a stop at a village called Kam-erlu (obviously referring to Ghamarlu—Tr.). We were quartered at a camp made up of American tents, some two kilometers from the village. Tired, and thoroughly exhausted, we stretched out and instantly fell asleep. In the morning, at sunrise, we were on our feet, gazing again at Mount Ararat. It was lost now in the mists, wholly cut off from the plain, while its twin tops hung from the clouds, bathed in the sun-

light. I had never seen such a wonderful sight in all my life. The mountain kept changing, assuming a new and wondrous view every hour. The Armenians had a right to call it the sacred mountain. The Ararat of the Armenians inspired faith in the unbeliever, and hope in the hopeless.

We were supposed to work on construction, in the factories or the various work shops, each according to his specialty. Although a certified architect, I also knew my father's trade. My father was a specialist in the manufacture of beer in Bavaria. When they asked me, "what's your trade?" I replied, "Architect."

—We have no need of architects. Do you know any other trade?

—I am a beer specialist.

—We could use you then. Go, register as a beer specialist. You shall be stationed in Yerevan.

There were 34 of us who were transferred to Yerevan. Later we learned Yerevan was the capital of Armenia. We had to walk from our living quarters to the factory each morning. Presently, we discovered that we could see Mount Ararat from anywhere. Later we learned that Ararat could be seen from any part of Armenia. Was it because the country was so small, or Mount Ararat was so great? Ararat dominated everywhere. But we were quite late in learning that Ararat was not on Armenian soil but had been occupied by the Turks. The worker Alexan told me this. He was an Armenian with a large nose and black shining eyes. The Armenians called us "Nemetz" which in Russian means German. They were wont to shout at us rudely, "Hey Nemetz, idi souda," (Hey you, German, come here). They always spoke to us in Russian which by now we could slightly understand.

Our work began at 7 o'clock in the morning and lasted until 7 P.M. At noon we were given half an hour for lunch which consisted of 250 grams of black bread and

the perennial borsch (a Russian concoction of cabbage) in which the pieces of cabbage floundered, and in which, like a miracle, we occasionally found a random piece of meat which thrilled the discoverer as if he had won a derby prize.

There were other captives among us, including Armenians who worked like slaves. These never spoke, were always gloomy and surly, only occasionally mumbling something under the nose, obviously swearing at the Russian or Armenian guards. We had no right to step out of our camp which was surrounded by barbed wire and was closely watched. We were not permitted to speak with another, but we often disregarded this rule and whispered to one another. Once, worker Alexan came to me and said:

—Which is larger, Berlin, or Yerevan?

—I've never seen Yerevan,—I replied.

—Are there any theaters, motion picture houses, or coffee houses in Berlin?

—There are magnificent theaters, splendid motion pictures, beautiful clubs and restaurants, with comfortable chairs and snow white table cloths.

—Can every one enter in those places?

—Of course.

—Hmm! —And that hmm was most eloquent. The Armenians pronounce that introspective exclamation beautifully.

—Do you know, I have a brother in Berlin, he continued. He is an officer of the Red Army. I have had no news of him for a long time.

Just then one of the guards approached us. Alexan, who until then had been intimate with me, suddenly changed, and shouted at me: "Hey you, Nemetz, snap out of it, this is not Berlin."

I was shocked.

I came to know many Armenians of various types and dispositions. Some of them were reticent and suspicious; others were talkative and carefree. These held no office in the government and they treated us

well. I felt that this people was unfortunate, deprived of all freedom, and the right of expression, and what is most important of all, individuality was dead in them. The whip of the ruler was ever hanging over their heads. The harsh Stalinian regime had seared its stamp on their souls. When they were alone, free from watchful eyes, they were men, good and sympathetic, but in the presence of another they suddenly became sullen and officious. They avoided talking about politics, but once as Alexan approached me I asked him:

—How many square kilometers is the area of Armenia?

He looked at me with suspicious eyes and replied:

—It's very small, but we have another Armenia on the other side of Masis (Ararat); that Armenia is great and is now held by the Turks. Some day it will be ours.

—Do you believe that?

—That's what they tell us. Comrade Stalin has given his pledge, and when Stalin promises something, he fulfills it.

It seemed even the life and death questions of this people depended on the word of "Comrade Stalin."

For a long time I had no news of my brother Hermann. Two months later they transferred to our quarters Carl and several other of our former comrades. Carl informed me that Hermann was dead. The next day Alexan approached me sorrowfully and informed me that his brother Gevorg had been killed in Berlin and was buried on German soil. The German, Hermann, was buried on Armenian soil, and the Armenian, Gevorg, on German soil.

O holy German land, cherish the body of that Armenian soldier within thy bosom; and thou, wondrous Ararat, watch over the German, Hermann; they both were the victims of the same tyranny and the same despotism!

We asked them to take us to church. Two weeks later, under the escort of guards, we

were permitted to attend church. It was an edifice after the Armenian style of architecture, called The Church of the Illuminator. The inside was bare and unpretentious, with a dry floor, and a simple, unadorned altar. The picture of a sad Mother of God hung from the altar, illuminated by two white candles in rusty candlesticks. The Mother of God held firmly to her breast the Child Jesus, as if fearful lest they pluck him off from her bosom. A poor old priest,

in a black worn-out garb, was reading from a torn gospel.

We prayed from the heart in the temple of the Armenians, to the God of the Armenians. I prayed for the souls of Hermann and Gevorg, for all the Hermanns. I do not know if my words reached the ears of the Lord, because it seemed to me the God of the Armenians was troubled, had left that temple, and was soaring over the crests of Mount Ararat.

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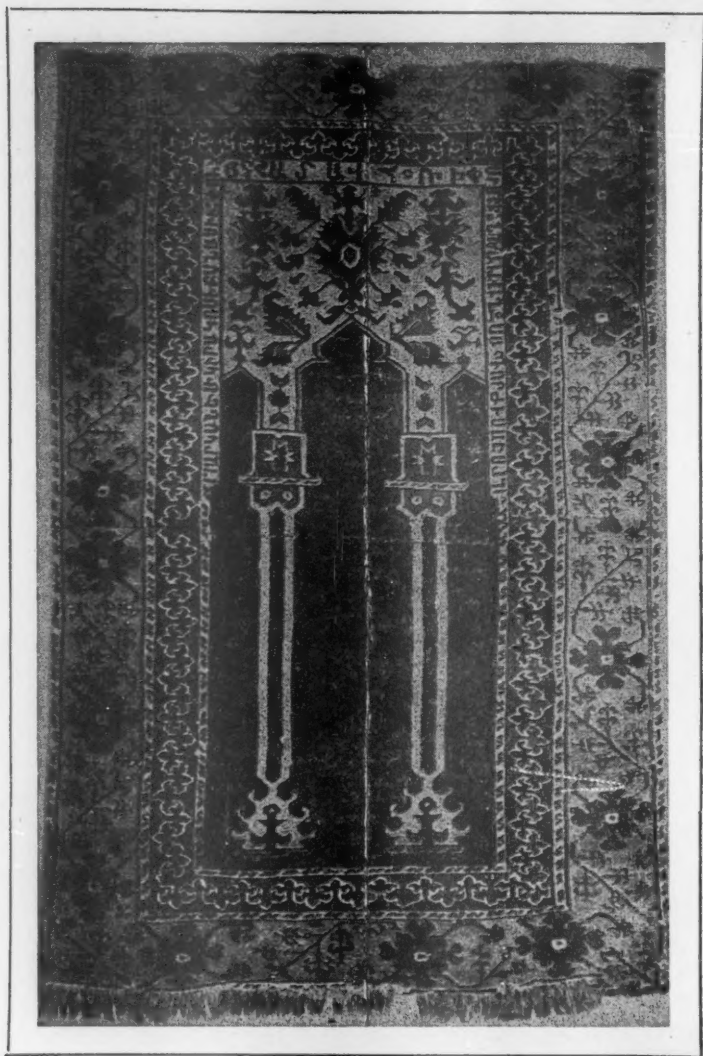
## RECONCILIATION

NUVER KOUMYAN

*We were like two broken pieces,  
You and I,  
Separated from each other,  
How lonely we stood there,  
Alone.*

*Neither you nor I  
Could function well:  
The harmony was broken,  
How pathetic was our struggle  
Alone.*

*Now we come back  
To each other again,  
And fill the empty place,  
How perfect  
Is our song now!*



RUG WITH ARMENIAN INSCRIPTION,  
DATED A.D. 1202

# A HISTORICAL GLIMPSE AT THE ART OF RUG WEAVING IN ARMENIA

By H. KURDIAN

There has been a great deal said about rugs and carpets from Armenia and especially the Dragon Carpets which enrich the rug displays of some of the world's most prominent museums, and which have been mentioned in most of the prominent publications about rugs; but so far there has been no attempt to assign a definite history of the rug weaving in Armenia.

Armenia was well known among the ancients for its textiles, and as early as 714 B.C. the Assyrian conquerer Sargon informs us that certain red dyed textiles of Urartu (Ararat) were famous. Ararat is the name of the mountain about which Armenia spreads itself in all directions. Armenia among ancients was known also as Land of Urartu.

The ancient Armenian cities of Douin (Deinil or Dabil of the Arabs), Artashat, Arzenkan, Van, Ani, etc., were greatly famed for the products of their looms, textiles and rugs, and also for their dyes, the demand for them being such that they were exported far and near. To keep this paper within certain limits I will have to leave out the many valuable historical testimonies of and the references to the textiles in general, and confine my research to that part under discussion, namely, rugs.

At the present we do not have any records which enable us to prove that rug weaving existed in Armenia before the Christian era,

however, Walter A. Hawley states: "In Armenia and Asia Minor it is probable that weaving existed before the Christian era, and that the earliest carpets which remain, though affected by more eastern influences, are largely the product of an indigenous art."

(1)

Earliest type Armenian, Caucasian and even Persian rugs show distinct traces of influence from the early Armenian pre-Christian era religious designs, especially those portraying water worship from which comes the Hook, Dragon, and other designs as in the so-called Caucasian rugs. However, there still remains a great deal to be brought forward and to be proved, but which cannot be accomplished until extensive excavations among the many ancient ruined cities of Armenia, which were its cultural centers, have been made.

In the IV century according to the ancient Armenian historian Phavstos Buzant, the Armenian Kings were accustomed to eating while seated on fine rugs. In the year 369 A.D. the King of Armenia, Arshak (Arsaces), was captured by the King of Persia, Sapor, who imprisoned him in a sort of bastille of Persia called the Castle of Anush where he was kept in the utmost isolation. One of King Arshak's faithful Princes, Dra-

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(1) *Oriental Rugs*. —1927 Dodd, Mead and Company, New York. p. 94.



stamat by name, gained the gratitude of King Sapor for some brave deeds committed against his enemies and King Sapor, wishing to reward his great service, promised to fulfill any of his desires. According to the testimony of Phavstos Buzant, he begged Sapor to "Give me orders so I can go and see my native lord Arshak, King of Armenians. Permit me for one day so I will be able to go to him, and give me orders so I will be able to free him from his bonds, and so I will dare wash his head, and annoint and dress him in robes, and spread beneath him rugs, and to serve him roast" . . . "Drastamat received permission and went and freed Arshak from his iron bonds of handcuffs, and foot irons, and the sets of chains of his neck, and he washed his head, bathed his body, clothed him in fine robes, and spread beneath him carpets (or rugs) and seated him, and served in front of him a dinner, as was the custom of the Kings . . . but the unfortunate Armenian King, with the knife he had in his hand, with which he was to eat fruit, stabbed himself in the heart and died then and there, while yet reclining on the rug." (2)

Phavstos Buzant was an Armenian historian of the IV century, who dealt with the period from 330 to 390. He was faithful in his narrations especially of customs and traditions of Armenia, and his above statements are conclusive evidence that it was the custom for Armenian Kings to dine while seated on a rug or carpet, which was spread on the floor and upon which was placed a second cloth or leather coverlet, upon which the food was placed. Armenians dined in this manner until very recent times. This was not a special custom of the Armenians alone, for their neighbors also dined in the same manner. Among the early Venetian and English travellers to the Near East, that is to Caucasia, Turkey and Persia, have

been many participants to dinners served in this manner or witnesses to that style of dining.

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In the V century A.D., the Armenian language is thought, by some, to have been discovered and, by others, to have been reformed. The old Armenian language, known as Golden Armenian, was used as the language of the literary and many books of the Christian religion, already the national religion of Armenia since 300 A.D., were translated and written in the Armenian alphabet among which were the four books of the Gospel. In this V century Armenian translation of the New Testament, the word KAPERT is used several times. KAPERT or CAPERT means *rug* or *kilim* (rug without nape), but as the word was used by the common Armenians its pronunciation became changed from CAPERT to CARPET.

The earliest known rug and carpet merchants in Europe were Armenians who had been dealing in rugs in the Flemish city of Bruges since 1340, and in the years of 1354 and 1358 these merchants were engaged in selling their rugs and carpets in a sort of bazaar in front of the church. These Armenian merchants not being literary and being unmindful of grammatical errors, represented their rugs to the European buyers as CARPETS and not *Caperts* as the word should have been pronounced, hence we have inherited our word carpet from the Armenian word *capert* meaning a rug spread on the floor. This word *carpet*, as far as I can tell, was first used in English literature in the XVI century (see Levins, carpet-tapes) although the word *carpite*, meaning a *coarse cloth*, was known as early as XIII century among the Latin languages.

According to the Armenian historian Stepannos Orbelian, the Catholicos of the Armenians, Mushai, visited the Armenian province of Siunik, and was welcomed by the Armenian Princess, Sahaguia, in V cen-

(2) *History of Armenia* (in Armenian). —Smt. Lazare, Venice. 1914 pp. 262-263.

tury. The Catholicos, that is the head of the Armenian Apostolic church, appeared with great pomp, "and so with great magnificence he was led to the royal throne where they seated him on a golden threaded and pearl entwined rug which had been spread over the throne of princes." (3)

This testimony is valuable from several angles. First, we learn that as early as the V century the thrones of the Armenian Kings and Princes were covered with rich rugs as well as those upon which they seated persons whom they wished to honor. Second, the above evidence and some that we shall come across later show conclusively that rugs woven with gold and pearls were known to the native Armenian weavers as early as the V century, and that silk, silver and almost every kind of precious stones, gold, were used in carpets by the Persians for their Kings as early as the VII century. Such a carpet in Persia fell into the hands of the Arabs in the year 637 A.D. when they captured and looted the ancient Persian capital of Ctesiphon. The rug was known as the Winter Carpet and also as the Spring of Chosroes, because it was made originally for Chosroes I, King of Persia, before the year 531 A.D.

Khazar Phaphetzy, another V century Armenian historian, says in his letter to Prince Vahan Mamikonian of Armenia: "I was nursed with you and we were the best of playmates; I carried your rugs upon which we used to play". (4) This shows that in ancient Armenia rugs were even used for children to play upon and it so happens that even today small rugs are spread in suitable places such as in the garden, under a tree, on the bank of a brook, upon which the young may play or the old relax.

The Armenian historian Ughthaness,

speaking of the Armenian Catholicos, Movses II (574-604 A.D.) describes the treasury of the Patriarchate thus: "The religious robes and garments were woven with golden threads and were ornamented with rich embroidery and embossed with precious stones". (5) Rugs, also have always been used in Armenian churches and to this fact a great many European and English travellers testify.

In the VII century when the famous Prince of Albanians (in Armenian Caucasus) Chiwanshir, was killed, one of his nephews swore to revenge him and according to the Armenian historian Movses Gaghna-kaduatzy, "they went up towards the province of Artzagh (in Armenia) revengeful for the assassination, and they found the house of the assassin's father and they destroyed it with fire, and looted it of silken woven brocades, and colorful carpets . . . and then returned." (6) This Albania (in Armenian pronounced *Aghwan*) should not be confused with the Albania in the Balkan Peninsula. The Albania of the Caucasus was a historical part of Greater Armenia, and at the present is known as Shirvan, whose industrial capital was Shamakh or Shamakhy, famous for its silken products and especially famous for its splendid Soumak kilims, or napless carpets. Armenians have constituted a majority of the population through the ages up until the XVII century when continuous wars, caused a sharp decline in the population and especially caused the peace-loving and industrious Armenians to emigrate in great numbers.

The above statements showing how much rugs and carpets were appreciated by the Armenians, and the many and varied places where they used them should dispel any doubts from our minds that rugs were woven

(3) History of the Province of Seisakan. —(in Armenian) publ. in Paris, p. 116.

(4) History of Armenia. —(in Armenian) publ. in St. Lazare, Venice, 1891, p. 644.

(5) History of Armenia. —(in Armenian) publ. Etchmiadzin, Armenia, 1871, p. 66.

(6) History of Albanians (in Armenian) publ. Tiflis, Georgia, 1913, p. 356-7.

in Armenia. This very appreciation and demand for rugs, the industrial background of Armenia, and the advanced state of textile production are signs that show that the rug industry was not only flourishing, but had reached such technical heights as to employ besides ordinary wool, silk, gold, silver, embossing the whole with pearls and precious stones. Along with this technical advancement it is reasonable to assume that the artistic execution advanced also and that the colors and designs were beautifully harmonized. It is unfortunate that we have not inherited any rugs from this very interesting period of Armenia, but judging from other phases of Armenian culture, around the VIII and IX centuries, it safe to say that the country produced rugs and carpets which were far above the technical and artistic merit of the rugs and carpets that are known as Armenian in this day. I see these rugs as being simpler with more symbolized designs and more geometrically expressed, with bright but not gaudy colors. They were oblong in shape and not very large in size.

In line with the above, Ibn Khaldun, an Arab historian of the IX century (775-786 A.D.) states that the list of taxes against native Armenian productions levied by the Caliphs of Bagdad was headed by rugs. The list reads, "20 rugs, 580 fund rackm, 10,000 fund sourmahi, 10,000 spiced fish, 200 mules, and 30 hawks." (7) The thing that interests us is that *rugs* headed the list. Evidently the products of Armenian rug weavers were so notable, and Armenian rugs in such great demand, that the Caliphs found it necessary and suitable to impose a quota of rugs as part of taxes levied from the best known productions of Armenia.

From the seventh to the eleventh century Armenia was under the dominion of the Caliphs of Bagdad. The Arabic civilization was a mosaic of the culture of the conquered

nations in the fast and furiously growing Islamic Empire of Bagdad. The Armenian contribution to that civilization was architecture, stone carving, copper and silver-smithing, and textiles in which class are included rugs. Each country was taxed, aside from a certain sum of money, also for the things for which it was best known, so that it is only natural that rugs should head the list of Armenian production taxes, because of their international reputation as weavers of the finest of rugs and carpets. The assumption that the Armenians were the best weavers of rugs in the VIIIth century is further illustrated by the fact that the Arabs did not tax any other country for their rugs; not even Persia, in which country we are not even sure that rugs were woven at this time. George Rawlinson in speaking of ancient historical times, in his celebrated work *SEVEN GREAT MONARCHIES*, says of Persian fabrics: "The arts of weaving and dyeing were undoubtedly practised in the dominant country, as well as in most of the subject provinces, and the Persian dyes seem even to have had a certain reputation; but none of the productions of their looms acquired a name among foreign nations". They imported their carpets from Babylon. (8)

As the quantity of the rugs in the above tax list is not great, we assume that these rugs were extra fine and probably woven especially for the Caliphs, and woven with gold, silver, silk and pearls or, if only wool, they must have been of excellent technical workmanship and artistic conception, for the Caliphs only accumulated the finest and the best. The Caliph to whom the Armenians paid the 20 rugs as tax was the Abbasid Caliph, Mohammed Ibn Mansur el Mahdi, father of Haroun ar Rashid, the colorful and romantic Caliph of the famed *One Thousand and One Nights* (known as *The*

(7) *Kulturgeschichte*, Alf. v. Kremer. — I p. 358.

(8) Publ. A. L. Burt Com. New York, II vol. p. 419.



Arabian Nights). Mahdi and his son were both successful rulers, and loved rich and beautiful things. Their palaces were adorned and ornamented with the rich and beautiful things which they obtained from their subjected nations, and their collection of Armenian rugs, no doubt, was highly appreciated and treasured.

Driven by their insatiate desire for the rich and beautiful, the Arabs not only caused the Armenians to pay their taxes in rugs, but plundered the country whenever they could find an opportunity. In the IX century the Arab overseer of Armenia, Yezid, plundered the church of St. Gregory in Pakvan, Armenia, and according to the contemporary Armenian historian Hovhannes Catholicos (898-931 A.D.) took away "beautiful and ever gorgeous vestments, of the god built Altar, of gold and silver, and colorful holy curtains, robes and rugs." (9) The largest part of the loot, according to the regulations of the Caliphs, had to be turned over to his treasury.

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A XIII century rug with an Armenian inscription, and dated 1202, has come down to us. The inscription on the rug I render thus: "This rug of the learned Guiragos is given as a remembrance from Hripssimai in this year of our Lord 1202. Pray for me." (10) Guiragos in Armenian names is a male name, Hripssimai is a female.

A word in the inscription of the rug mentioned above is a silent declarer of its authenticity. This word, *argannely*, is used in old Armenian literature to denote a rug, but since the XIV century the word which is used is *gorg* (rug). *Argannely*, until very

recently, has been given, by Armenian dictionaries, a meaning that has no connection with rugs. Now if this rug was a fake the person writing the inscription surely would not have used this word from antiquity with its proper meaning.

Armenians also gave rugs as gifts to the Arabs. According to the Armenian historian mentioned in the last paragraph, the Armenian King Sumpad (890-914 A.D.) in giving gifts in return for some received from the Arab overseer, Yousouf, Sumpad gave him "beautifully suitable and gorgeous ornamental robes, and beautifully designed rugs in part colored with Kermiz dye." (11)

Thus were formed the immense collections of rugs of the Islamic Rulers. According to Walter A. Hawley, "During the Caliphate (632 to 1258 A.D.) the Moslem rulers, devoted to luxury, preserved the art treasures of their conquered subjects and encouraged them to renewed efforts. This is particularly true of the Caliphs and sultans of Syria and Egypt." And adds: "As the imperfect records which have been left us indicate that the finest carpet collections of this period were in the mosques and palaces of Syria and Egypt, it has been assumed that they were woven by the native artisans. To some extent this is doubtless true, as rug weaving was one of the oldest industries of these countries. But it is more probable that most of them were made elsewhere and were acquired as presents or by purchase. Some were made in Armenia, Assyria, and Turkestan." (12) We have already shown that Islamic Rulers besides receiving rugs as presents or purchasing them, also acquired them in form of taxes and as their share of the loot.

During this same period the palaces of Armenia were also richly decorated with beautiful rugs. In the year 953 A.D., the King of Armenia, Ashot the Benefactor, en-

(9) History of Armenia (in Armenian). Publ. in St. Jacob's Monastery, Jerusalem, 1867, p. 139.

(10) A monograph has been published on this rug in German. Ein Orientalischen Tappich. — Alois Riegler. — Verlag von Gerog. Siemens, 1895, Berlin.

(11) Same p. 250.

(12) Oriental Rugs. — New York, 1927, p. 76-77.

tained the poor of Armenia with such a free hand that it is said that he became impoverished. An Armenian historian speaking of his deeds says, that "he gave so freely to the needy, that at his death there was not a cent left in his treasury, and that he even robbed the walls and the rugs of their ornaments, and gave them also to the needy." (13) The above mentioned ornaments of rugs undoubtedly were pearls, or other precious stones, silver and gold, with which some of the rugs were known to have been decorated.

It is not only accounts of Armenian historians that show that rugs were woven in Armenia. Ebn Haukal, the Arab geographer of the X century informs us: "Deinel is a larger city than Ardebil, and the chief town of Armenia. Here they manufacture fine hangings and carpets, and make the beautiful color called Kermiz." (14) Deinel is the Arabic form for the Armenian town of Douin, near another famous town, Artashat. Both of these cities at one time or another were capitals of Armenia. They flourished as religious, political and cultural centers; they were celebrated for their textile factories and dye works. Among their dyes Kermiz was the most famous. Kermiz, a sort of bug dye, used only for dying silk and wool, was a native product of Armenia. This particular bug which produced the Kermiz, was obtainable in the foot hills of Mt. Ararat, near Douin and Artashat (15), the preparation of Kermiz being a specialty of theirs for which the Arabs named those cities Kariat al Kermiz. (16)

Ebn Haukal gives additional valuable information about Armenian textiles as in

- (13) *Universal history (in Armenian)* publ. in St. Petersburg, Russia, 1885, p. 181.  
 (14) *The Oriental Geography of Ebn Haukal*. — Trans. Sir William Ouseley. — London, 1800, p. 161.  
 (15) These two towns were hardly 1,000 meters apart from each other.  
 (16) The Arab historians using this name are, Pelakory (VIII century), Al-Baladhory (X century), Yacut (XIII century).  
 (17) *The Oriental Geography*, p. 159.

speaking of Derbent, "Here they also weave tapestry, or carpets, and cultivate saffron."

(17) Derbend was under the influence of Armenians and he states that even "the inhabitants of Ardebil use the Armenian tongue." (18) This shows conclusively that Armenia had great cultural influence in Caucasia outside of its historical boundaries because Ardebil never was a part of Greater Armenia.

In the year 972 A.D. the Armenian Catholics, Ter Khachig, built a church at Argina, in Shirak, Armenia, and decorated it with rugs, which in all probability were woven in Douin, and the Armenian historian Stepanos Vartapet Taronatzy, informs us that the church "was adorned gorgeously with rugs woven in gold and silver, and dyed with Kermiz." (19) Also, the wife of the Armenian King, Gagik (989-1020 A.D.), Gadramidai, made various gifts to the cathedral in the Armenian capital city of Ani, "decorating it with designed rugs which were woven with golden thread and dyed with Kermiz." (20)

The XIII century Arab geographers Yakut and Mustafy testify that rugs were woven in Armenia. Mustafy, speaking of Van, says: "fort between Khelath and the land of Tiflis, and manufactures rugs." (21)

Another valuable witness is Marco Polo, who speaking of Turcomania states: "In Turcomania, there are people of three races. In the first place there are the Turcomans . . . they live by breeding cattle . . . the other races are Armenians and mixed with them, Greeks, who inhabit the cities and towns, living by trade and handicrafts. For you must know that the finest carpets in the world, and the most beautiful, are manufactured there. Most splendid and rich silk cloths, both crimson and of other colors, are also made there, together with many

(18) Same, p. 163.

(19) *Universal history (in Armenian)* p. 185.

(20) Same, p. 248.

(21) *Dictionnaire Mustafy*, Paris, 1881, p. 585.

other things. The most important cities are Konia, Ankara, Caesaria, Bursa, Smyrna. Turcomania, according to early travellers and geographers, included greater Armenia, and although Marco Polo visited some of the great Armenian colonial towns of Asia Minor such as Caesaria and Sevast (Turkish *Sevas*, Armenian *Sebastia*) he never mentions visiting eastern Armenia, although he speaks of Georgia. Undoubtedly Marco Polo had to traverse through eastern Armenia to be able to reach Georgia; also he speaks of Mt. Ararat, therefore Armenia was known to him although not as much as western Armenia with its Arzingan, Arzouroum, Arjesh (Arzizi), and Babert (Baiburth), where he had an extensive visit.

The Armenians of Konia, Caesaria and Sevast were the result of large immigrations from Armenia proper, coming from sections around Van and Vaspourakan. In the X century an Armenian King, Senekerim Artzrouny, moved with all his retinue including his army and the entire population of his country, to Sevast where, in accord with the Emperor of the Byzantines, Basil II (976-1025 A.D.) he established an Armenian Kingdom under the Byzantines. The Armenian Kingdom of Sevast had four kings and existed until the year 1080 A.D. Other immigrations followed this one and a large number of Armenians were concentrated in Konia, Ankara, Caesaria, Bursa, Smyrna. They were mainly artisans, weavers, silversmiths, architects, stonemasons, sculptors, a great many merchants. The more warlike part of the population went farther south into Cilicia, where in the X century they formed a powerful Armenian principedom, which eventually became a kingdom, and spread itself around the Mediterranean Sea above Syria and Palestine and held its identity until 1375. This little kingdom played

an important part during the Crusades, was known as Little or Lesser Armenia, and became the commercial center of the Levant with its internationally known trading seaport of Layass or Ayass.

The Spanish Ambassador, Clavijo, who was sent to Tamerlang in 1404, passed through Armenia, and speaking of Arzingan and its district, states that villages were mainly populated by Armenians. "Wherever we halted, whether passing through by day or to stay the night, they (the natives) would bring out carpets from the houses and seat us honourably upon them. Next they would produce a leather mat for a tablecloth, as might be with us a round of (Cordovan) leather such as we call Guadamacir, and this with them is known as a Sofra, and on this they would place bread." (23) This statement by Clavijo takes us back to the reference in the IV century (24) suicide of an Armenian King when he was about to eat seated on a rug. Clavijo's statement shows that this custom of serving food in this manner is an Armenian custom that has not changed in a thousand years, that is from IV to XV century, a custom that even in our times existed.

Continuous plunderings, raiding, and wars upon Armenia by the Tartars, Turks and Persians, forced the industrious and peace loving natives to emigrate to Poland, Bessarabia, Transylvania, and the Crimea in groups sometimes as large as 100,000. What with the deportation of Armenian artisans first by Tamerlang to Samarkand, second by Sultan Selim in the XVI century to Bursa and Sevast etc., and third by Shah Abbas in the XVII century to Khorassan and to Isphahan, the capital of Persia, so depleted the country of its inhabitants that the arts, literature, industries, and culture in general was alarmingly decreased and degenerated

(22) The Travels of Marco Polo. —Trans. into English by Professor Aldo Ricci from the new text of L. F. Benedetto. —1931, Viking Press, New York, p. 20.

(23) Clavijo Embassy to Tamerlane. —trans. by Guy Le Strange. —The Broadway Travellers. —Harper & Brothers, 1928, p. 121.

(24) See the 5th paragraph of this article.

in Armenia. But in spite of all this, travelers through this Armenian country, known as Turcomania, mention the splendid accomplishments of the present artisans. John Cartwright visited Armenia in 1603, and in his narrative states: "At Chiulfal we stayed eight days, and passed again the river Araxis, leaving the noble kingdom of Armenia, called now Turcomania, because of the Turcomans, a people who came out of Scythia (as we noted before) who live as shepherds in their tents, but the native people give themselves to husbandry, and other manual sciences, as working of fine carpets and fine chamlets." (25) Of course the native people mentioned by Cartwright were Armenians.

The testimony of John Cartwright is similar to that given by Marco Polo, almost three centuries before. The Turcomans are still shepherds, living a nomadic life under their tents. This naturally refutes the supposition which Mr. A. U. Pope advanced in one of his articles. (26) According to Mr. A. U. Pope, Turcoman nomad tribes, Yuruks, were the ones that were weaving rugs, that the Muhamedan Turkish stock was "the race that probably introduced knotted weaving into Western Asia." Mr. A. U. Pope has evidently misunderstood Marco Polo and completely overlooked John Cartwright in coming to his above decisions. And his statement that "there is no record nor even any local tradition that rug weaving was ever carried on in Armenia to any extent" shows that he must have failed of historical reason or been completely ignorant of the very valuable references to rug weaving art in Armenia, from the Armenian historical sources and of the information given very clearly in Arab works like those of Ebn

Khaldun, Ebn Haukal, Mustafy, Yakut and others most of whom have been translated into English, but unfortunately have been little known and therefore requiring a little work to find.

During 1640-1650 Evlya Efendy, the Turkish geographer and historian, states that among the productions of Baibur, the famous Armenian city, are "also the carpets and felts of Baibur, light, well-colored, fanciful carpets which are exported into all countries." (27)

An Armenian rug has come down to us from 1700 A.D., and bears the following inscription: "I Kohar, full of sin and weak of soul, with my beginner's hands I wove (this rug), whoever reads this is to say a prayer for me. The year 1700." This rug is at present in the South Kensington Museum in London. There are also a few other rugs from this period, but the inscriptions are unsolvable, although they are in Armenian characters.

Ending this list of facts about the art of rug weaving in Armenia I want to add that this is not all that can be said in support of this subject. The contribution of Armenia in the development of rug weaving, both in technique and art, is much greater than is admitted at present. New historical and archeological discoveries in Armenia refute many suppositions that were thought to be based on facts that in fact were not fundamental nor logical. I believe most of the errors in the field of rug research have been due to the lack of knowledge of the Armenian language, history and art, and which we find is absolutely necessary in order to establish accurate historical bases for any research in this or other Near Eastern art fields.

(25) *Purchas His Pilgrims*. —Vol. VIII, p. 498 (1905 Edition).

(26) *The Myth of the Armenian Carpets*. —In the *Jahrbuch der Asiatischen Kunst*, 1925, Berlin. Vol. II, p. 188.

(27) *The Travels of Evliya Efendi*. —London, 1850, Vol II, p. 188.

# EXPERIENCES OF A TEEN-AGE BOY

By JOHN R. MARDICK

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The writer of this article came to the United States in 1896 at the age of 18. He graduated from Boston High School in 1898, then from Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1902. As a chemical engineer he has served in various capacities in two World Wars with a number of firms manufacturing chemicals and explosives. At present he is retired and spends most of his time writing his memoirs which cover well over half a century.

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I was born in the small town of Bardizag (little garden) of 10,000 inhabitants, located on the south shores of the gulf of Ismid, 55 miles from Constantinople. The town was nestled amid the hills and woods three miles from the gulf and was entirely surrounded by mulberry trees\* and vineyards. It was beautifully situated about 1000 ft. above sea level. Its healthy climate and spring waters were so famous that it has served for many years as a summer resort.

Besides its climate Bardizag was also noted for its schools: the Armenian High School maintained by the Armenian Missionary Board (Congregational) and the other, the National Academy supported by the townspeople. Students flocked here from far and wide from various cities of Turkey, even from Constantinople.

The inhabitants of Bardizag were all Armenians with the exception of a few Turkish government officials together with the nominal police force. The dominant language of the town was Armenian; the Turks themselves spoke Armenian and sent their children to Armenian schools. The government

decrees were proclaimed by the town crier in Armenian up and down the streets, as the majority of the people did not understand Turkish which was regarded a foreign language such as English and French, and special effort had to be made to master it adequately.

Amid such quaint surroundings I was brought up in an atmosphere of Armenian patriotism. As there were no interesting diversions for the youth such as games, movies and the like, they were absorbed only in books or in Nationalistic Associations in order to give vent to their youthful energies. Early in life, at the age of 16, I was thrown into this maelstrom and became quite active in Armenian revolutionary movements and their social activities. It is needless to say that any aspirations toward reform and political freedom on the part of the Armenians were ruthlessly suppressed by Sultan Hamid by exile and imprisonment either in Africa (Tripoli) or the Arabian deserts.

One may ask a pertinent question at this juncture. What can teen-agers do in such dangerous revolutionary movements? They were sent here and there as errand boys carrying important communications. Messages were written in invisible ink on the

\* In late spring the townspeople cultivated silkworms, the manufacture of silk thread being the main industry of the town.



backs of the boys and despatched where needed, certain that the Turks would never suspect them.

As I look back, I recall the time I served as an errand boy and was ordered to go a long distance, a day's journey on horseback, carrying a message to a local revolutionary leader regarding the liquidation of the Armenian Patriarch who was opposed to our revolutionary activities and was on friendly terms with the Sultan. After a tiresome journey over the mountains and through the valleys I reached my destination\* and presented the papers given to me by the Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Organization to be given to the district leader. I was unknown to this agent, and in order to hide his identity he denied being a party member and commenced to sing the praises of the Sultan and his government. However, I stuck to my guns and told him point blank that I wanted an answer as to whether or not he was going to undertake the job assigned to him.

After considerable dickering we finally understood each other. He explained to me the workings and meaning of the secret papers. One of the papers was an ordinary letter of greeting and the other was a fancy drawing of textile patterns of calico printing, used by dry-goods dealers. He opened holes from the designs and placed the sheet on the greeting letter which has assumed an entirely new meaning, thus, "Take necessary steps to dispatch the Patriarch who is at a near-by warm spring." I learned later that this agent could not carry out his mission because the victim was well protected by the authorities.

During the years between 1892 and 1896 the whole of Turkey was in turmoil. All

Christians, particularly the Armenians, were passing through dangerous and fateful days. Hope of reform, freedom of speech, press and assembly were gradually vanishing as more and more repressive measures were applied, to stem the tide of reform movements. Business was at a stand-still and the people lived in terrible agony. At this time the Turks had no reform party to speak of and young Armenian reformers were hunted down everywhere by fire and sword.

The Armenian reform advocates appealed first to the Sultan, then to the European powers for redress and amelioration of their lot. By the Treaty of Berlin the Turks promised general reforms and the powers, particularly England, undertook the responsibility of carrying out Article 61 of the Berlin convention, for which she got possession of the island of Cyprus. Later the Turkish government absolutely refused to listen to reform measures. On the contrary the Sultan stirred the Turkish populace against the Armenians as traitors to the Sultan and the Mohammedan religion. The European powers individually or collectively did nothing to ameliorate the life of the down-trodden Christians on account of mutual jealousies and intrigues. Meanwhile the English Prime Minister, Lord Salisbury was piously exclaiming, "England cannot raise her fleet to the top of Mt. Ararat," and the cynical Foreign Minister of Russia, Count Lobanoff was repeating with equal emphasis, "Russia is desirous of possessing Armenia without the Armenians."

In these memorable days there occurred many political events which brought forth the designs of Sultan Hamid and the shameful indifference of the European powers. Naturally, the Turks took advantage of the discordant attitude of the powers and became masters of the situation by skillfully playing the interests of one power against the others. All at once they started a systematic genocide and massacre on a large scale. The whole country was in the hands

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\*Revolutionary parties at that period advocated socialistic doctrines. I remember reading eagerly a French translation of Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backwards." During my trip over the mountains, when I saw Turkish life in rural districts, I was cured of socialism. Nobody at that time could swallow such fancy doctrines in Turkey.

of hoodlums and spies who took the government into their hands (with the tacit approval of the Sultan) and played havoc with the lives and property of the Armenians.

In this terrible situation I decided to leave the country for good in search of further education. I was then 18 years of age and had not yet used razors on my face, and the soft, blond down was visible on each side of my face. The Turkish governor of the district, who was hunting down the revolutionists, is said to have exclaimed that he "wanted to catch that boy with two whiskers." A short time before my father had died and left some property. I sold my share of the inheritance to my brothers in the spring of 1896 and left my town and went to Constantinople.

I stopped at a hotel in the Galata district of the Metropolis and became at once the object of curiosity on the part of the hotel manager who proposed to help me escape from the country for a consideration. I assured him that I was there for medical treatment and that I expected to remain in the city for a long time. Nevertheless there was a storm raging in my brain. I was a mere boy without experience and had not traveled much, neither had I been to any foreign country. I did not know the difficulties one encountered in a strange country where one had neither friends nor acquaintances.

Here I was in a strange city where I could not divulge my secret to anyone and had no way of knowing how I could escape from the clutches of the police. It was impossible to obtain a passport. The attempt itself was an immediate invitation for arrest. The Armenians were forbidden to travel in the provinces much less to cross the frontier.

\* \* \*

It was Sunday morning. A friend and I went to pay a last visit to the Evangelical Church which we revolutionaries had built overnight some time ago with the co-operation of the church folks in spite of the Turk-

ish opposition. (Sultan Hamid would not allow the erection of any church or school building for the Armenians). But we put up a small prefabricated chapel in five hours. When the police arrived at dawn, they found themselves face to face with a *fait accompli*. They saw the little crude edifice with a big cross at the top. They wouldn't dare tear down a church; that would involve them in diplomatic wrangles with foreign governments. The pastor of this little shanty preached that day an inspiring sermon which gave comfort and courage to my despairing spirits.

A large bridge spans a small inlet of the Sea of Marmora, joining the two sections of Constantinople. While I was crossing this bridge on my return from church, I suddenly found myself face to face with a suave and sneaky spy whom I knew from my home town and who was not at all friendly with me. I could read on his face the satisfaction of one who has just captured a bird flown out of its cage. He greeted me cordially and said, "Welcome to our city, Mardick Effendi" (Turkish title of respect), then asked, "Where are you staying? Where are you going now?" I told him the truth about where I was staying and invited him to come and see me. I knew he would be sure to call on me with a contingent of police for my arrest. Soon after that I met a former teacher of mine who smilingly said I might have some hidden motive for my appearance in the city. "No, Yervant Effendi," I said, "I am here for medical treatment."

Now that my whereabouts was known in the city, it was imperative that I hide myself without any loss of precious time. I returned immediately to my hotel, packed my belongings, jumped into a carriage and went to another hotel about two miles away. This gave me time to evade arrest overnight. I spent a restless and uneasy night and early next morning left the place without my luggage, never to return.

In the Galata section of Constantinople

where the docks are located, I visited the offices of all foreign passenger steamship agencies in search of a departing vessel to any port anywhere abroad, whether to Bulgaria, Romania, Greece or to any Mediterranean port. I learned to my sorrow that no steamers were either going or coming in or out of the city on that particular day. It is impossible to describe my anxiety and the dejected state of my mind upon this information. Yet I was somehow still hopeful of a miracle for my escape. But the question was where I could find asylum for the night. I did not dare go out to a hotel, nor did I know of any safe hiding place near a friend I could trust. In this seemingly hopeless situation I suddenly spied a small steamer slowly approaching the dock. I didn't dare to go near but kept watching her closely in the distance. The steamer lowered a bridge but no one came down. Evidently this was not a passenger boat but just a freighter. Soon four policemen surrounded the bridge. Later, two persons without luggage, probably commercial agents were permitted to enter the ship.

• • •

This was the decisive moment for me. It was necessary that I leave the city that very day without failure, if I wanted to save my life. Again I felt indignant at the thought that I might be arrested by the pointing finger of a detested spy. I decided to make an attempt to board this ship. I was going to be arrested anyway, sooner or later, I thought to myself, and would not lose anything by an effort to get freedom. I collected myself and in a carefree and nonchalant manner I started toward the ship with firm steps swinging my cane. I put my foot on the bridge totally ignoring the police when the chief grasped my arm and questioned me in Turkish: "Hey, where are you going?" I shook off his hand violently with seeming indignation and assuming a superiority complex I retorted in French: "Go

to hell, I don't understand you," which I knew he could not understand. While the chief of police, thunder-struck, was looking at me in a surprised manner, one of his pals advised him: "Don't put yourself in trouble for the sake of that 'infidel'." I took a deep breath. The police were unaware that I was Armenian. Without fear I continued to ascend. I had taken a desperate life and death chance and succeeded in my risky venture.

Later I learned that the ship was a French freighter which had skirted the southern shores of the Black Sea and was returning to France loaded with produce and poultry. The steamship agencies of Constantinople had not kept track of this freighter and had not paid any attention to its appearance in their midst. I must say here in passing that my physical features helped me greatly in escaping Turkish vigilance. I was very fair with golden hair unlike most of the Armenians.

I went at once to the captain-purser and asked for a passage ticket to Marseilles which was the home port of the ship. He looked me over and then inquired: "You are an Armenian, is not that so?" On my affirmative reply he handed me a ticket with the remark: "Go down the ship, stay there and pass the time with the seamen until five o'clock." I knew at once that the ship was scheduled to leave at 5:00, and to avoid any untoward incidents or clashes with the Turkish authorities, he did not want me to appear on the deck, although by a Turco-French commercial treaty the Turks could neither enter nor search French vessels.

My joy was indescribable. I went down as I was ordered and practiced my French with the seamen until the ship started to weigh anchor. As we entered the Sea of Marmora, I came out of my hiding-place and threw a last glance on the city. I am unable to describe my emotions at that moment. The metropolis with its tall minarets gleaming in the twilight, looked majestic



and mysterious, and I don't know of any skyline (not counting the night scene of our own city of New York) that could compare with it in grandeur and beauty.

My heart was heavy, however, as I was leaving behind me everything that was dear to a youth of 18—mother, brothers, sisters and friends, probably never to see them again; and Bardizag, my home town, the garden spot, where I had spent my adolescence and many happy years. Still I was looking ahead and did not know what the future had in store for me; what was to become of me in a strange land without friends and acquaintances. Everything looked dark and blue.

After we passed the Dardanelles, I took a breath of relief, a breath of new life and liberty. The following day we arrived at Pireus, Greece. My first duty was to in-

form my mother by letter that I was safe and that I was bound for America.

Soon after arriving at the U. S. I was informed that true to my predictions, the police, accompanied by spies, had sifted every known and unknown locality in the city where they thought I could have hidden. They had thoroughly ransacked the last hotel where I had stayed only one night. There they found my few belongings including a few English books. They took them to the headquarters with an air of triumph in the hope of finding there some compromising documents. It is easy to imagine their utter disappointment at finding that they had captured only an empty bag with nothing worth while in it.

Meanwhile the escaped bird from the cage was living a new life of liberty and contentment "in the land of the free and the brave."



## THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

*The following POEMS are from, or better still,  
just from*

### A WORLD OF QUESTIONS AND THINGS

KHATCHIK MINASIAN

#### II.

#### TEN DOLLAR MAD-MAN

*How do red calendar days hit you  
with drinks and cigar ends?  
Are you a holiday mad-man  
in the hey-day of life,  
speeding confetti slips across gay mobs  
when the year ends,  
running invitation to the ground  
when Washington or Lincoln's around,  
again and again to the grocers for booze?*

*Do you feel an important thing in the room  
after a laugh incited by drinks you took?*

*Have you ever dared a glass of milk  
over the new-year bar  
with a ninety-percent sailor majority?  
have you thought of the startled bar-girls  
with your fist breezing the green cabbage  
in the scented eye-range,  
or the casual shout for scotch,  
clutching the bottle for a ten dollar plunge  
and the uplift?*

*Have you accepted the chill  
with the unheeded plunge  
and grinned the grin of the vanquished?*

*Are you a ten dollar mad-man  
with a two dollar plunge?*

## A WINDY NIGHTMARE

*Can you plan on romance with a bald head?  
I remember when my neighbor's scalp went dry,  
we were delighted and talked of the dignity he had taken on  
without the effort of preparations,  
suggested a recent home made tonic  
the itching head could take to make the fuzz look rich.*

*He was a youth of twenty and suicidal;  
his life caved in when the light came through  
to show the hair-line going back  
and the contours of the head-base sloping.  
It was a true Aramaic head we told him  
and his life ended again  
for the hopes he made with tonics we shattered  
with definite explanations.*

*Can a moustache be matched with a bald head?  
I tried this and found it ridiculous without a hat,  
it seemed the whole frontalis had slipped  
and where the hair had been the moustache thrived.*

*There's a dread to going out on windy days.  
I've heard the frequent word or two like this -  
"he's cute! where has he shuffled all my life?"  
and then the cool reversion when the hat is tipped,  
"you fraud! you cheat!"*

*Have you ever wished to fall in sand traps  
on remote beaches?  
have you ever chilled in the summer suit to the knees?  
have you ever felt the desert waste a crowded place  
with the spider?*

*Can you balance your hat in a draft  
and carry on a normal word or two  
without the wish for weights on hat brims  
or a wall that keeps the air from shifting?*

*The boy of twenty suffered through a year,  
took up goggles in the sunny rooms  
and reconsoled himself with nobler visions.*

*Can I grin through the months  
and laugh at the recession in the ball mirror,  
the terrifying vision last left, the end of things?  
can I meet the winds relaxed and hatless  
and plot romance from the head?  
The late-year sky portends calms  
and the fevor thaw begins to runs*



## **POETRY BY DAVID ATAMIAN:**

### **TO BE BELOVED**

*My home is a wood where deep silence reigns;  
the voice of my beloved comes not there.  
O woman of my dreams, have you forgotten me?  
then know, although I sigh,  
I am not alone;  
the gods are with me.  
In my heart they live, and with their power  
will alter my destiny,  
for they and I are one.*

### **CILICIA**

*The snow capped peaks of Taurus  
glitter like diamond studded crowns  
against the blue sky;  
through the wooded ravines the clear streams  
cut vast gorges, and rush  
on the red soil, spreading jeweled fingers  
that reach toward the wide horizons  
and lose themselves in the Mediterranean.*

*Here is the land of myth and mystery  
where wild races left  
their footprints,  
and powerful empires fought  
and perished.*

*O beloved Cilicia!  
she is a young widow  
who mourns among her ruined castles  
for her ravished children.*

## DESTINY

*From the sweet waters of Lake Galilee  
the Jordan rushes madly,  
leaping downward  
like a fugitive from pursuit.*

*He shoots many arrows on the sun-baked wadi;  
he does not pause where the brilliant Apples of Sodom  
hang on their boughs  
above his hurrying course.*

*He hides his secret errand  
under the tamarisk and oleander;  
his foaming current sweeps  
the hanging veils of the willows.*

*He gathers, as he goes  
the crystal waters  
of many rivulets,  
and carries them to the salt marshes  
of the Dead Sea.*

*Nothing can hinder his rendezvous  
with oblivion.*

## SUNSET

*Under the whispering palms  
the brook unrolls like a bright ribbon  
winding on to the blue distance.*

*A young girl  
holding a water jar on her bare shoulder,  
rests for a moment;  
there is a scarlet flower in her dark hair,  
and her eyes are soft and unperturbed  
as a gazelle's.  
Her slender body, dark as polished metal,  
gleams in the red-gold light of the setting sun,  
and when she moves away  
she walks softly  
as in a dream.*



# HONOR

By AVETIS AHARONIAN

(Translated from Armenian by Arshag Mahdesian)

The villages of Shadakh were filled with alarm. The name of Miko resounded from one mountain to the other and all the length of the valley. He had encamped on the summit of a cliff, whence he spread terror throughout the countryside. To the enemy he was like a lion that had escaped from his iron cage, athirst for vengeance against those who had subjected him to a merciless slavery. The Turkish and Kurdish brigands, the scourge of the Armenian villages, shook with fear at the mention of the dread name of Miko. The Armenians blessed him; they prayed for his life. But among them there were, indeed, some who cursed their benefactor. It is thus that the sick child curses the doctor. The apathy of the slave leads him to prefer peace and quietude, no matter how disastrous. And no one cursed Miko so heartily as Hairo, of the village of K—.

Hairo was perfectly contented with his circumstances. In his stable were two strong oxen and some cows. Moreover, he possessed fields, which he cultivated with his own hands. He lived in peace and harmony with his parents, already advanced in age, and a young sister. It was true that at harvest time the Kurds and the Turks seized the greater part of his crops. Without doubt Hairo worked much and enjoyed little, but what remained had sufficed for his meager needs. It was said that the Turks had abducted an Armenian maiden, that the officials who had installed themselves in the house of Hairo's neighbor had outraged the man's wife, that the governor

had insulted the daughter of the mayor. But these things did not concern Hairo. Everything was tranquil in his abode. No one had ever yet made rude remarks to his sister, Nazeh. "Besides", he would argue to himself, "who is blamable in such cases? The people know that these things are customary among the infidels; when they have strangers in their houses, let them keep the family apart." Thus he calmed his conscience. Each morning, with his whip across his shoulder, he drove his oxen to the fields, and at evening he returned, humming a song. Why should he not curse Miko? Had not Miko's audacious deeds aroused the anger of the Kurds and the officials until there was even a question of establishing a military posse in the valley?

Soon, indeed, this military posse was established. It was near the fountain where the young girls of the village repaired for water. And for that reason Hairo was still further incensed at Miko and his comrades. An incident which happened then only served to increase this hatred.

It was at the close of an autumn day. Hairo, far from the village, in the solitary valley, had just finished plowing his last furrow.

"Good luck, Hairo!" cried some one, and Hairo, turning his head, saw Miko and his band of haidouks or revolutionists.

"Salutation!" responded Hairo, with suppressed hatred.

"What are you doing there, Hairo?"

"Do you not see that I am working?"

"But why work?"

In answer to this outlandish question Hairo stared at Miko and muttered:

"One would think you did not know that one has a family to support, and needs bread!"

"Ah, you labor in order to have bread!" exclaimed Miko, ironically. "You do well, Hairo! But do the Kurds and the Turkish officials leave you enough bread? Since you labor so much, have you still some bread at home?"

"Assuredly," answered Hairo.

"I am very glad of it," replied Miko. "If so, dear neighbor, we shall watch your oxen while you go and fetch us some. As you see, we are fugitives living in the mountains; we are forbidden to enter the villages. We are Christians like you, Armenians like you, and we have eaten nothing since yesterday."

That was the last straw! Hairo to go and bring bread for the bandits -- for the rebels! He sought an excuse to refuse, alleging fatigue and the distance, but in vain. Miko became more stern, more imperious. And Hairo at last submitted, muttering, as he left his oxen and took the path to the village:

"May God turn his face from you!"

Passing the military, he stopped. A terrible thought crossed his brain: Would it not be best to warn the officials and thus to rid himself forever of this demon Miko? He took a few steps forward with this intention, but suddenly a name which he had heard in church and which had never recurred to him so forcibly held him back -- Judas! He stopped short, his lips repeating automatically, "Judas! Judas!" He even seemed to hear a mysterious voice repeating ceaselessly: "Judas! Judas!" He hastened past the military posse as though to flee the temptation.

Miko received the bread. Hairo's hatred of Miko increased tenfold. He would have been glad if the authorities had arrested Miko, if they had destroyed him. But he

himself was afraid of committing a crime by betraying Miko.

Days passed, and Hairo resumed his customary labor; he even forgot about Miko. Then, one dark and ominous evening, as he returned from the fields, walking slowly, nonchalantly, like the two indolent oxen which he drove, and humming a tune while the oxen chewed their cuds, he was suddenly startled by the shriek of a woman. He stood petrified, shuddering to the marrow of his bones. Even the oxen were startled and pricked their ears.

Inside the military posse a crime was surely being committed -- the victim must be a woman. Near the fountain was the pitcher which she had brought for water. Hairo's first impulse was to flee. What could he do? Should he enter or cry for help? Of what use would that be? Why meddle with the affairs of others? Did it concern him? He merely wondered who the woman might be.

He took one step forward, but could not proceed. He seemed powerless to move; an irresistible force nailed him before the military posse. It was the powerful voice of justice, newly awakened in his soul, that held him there, that protested against the horror of the crime committed.

Suddenly the door of the military posse opened, and a woman, tearing herself from the foul hands of the officials, flew into the arms of Hairo, screaming, piteously:

"Save me, brother, save me!"

It was Nazeh!

Hairo's eyesight failed him, as though a thunderbolt had stricken him blind. It seemed to him that the universe was falling to pieces; that the world was coming to an end. Thus he bore home the little unconscious Nazeh. Then he withdrew to a corner, shedding tears that could not assuage his grief. It was long since he had wept, and his copious tears were bestowed upon all the wounded, dishonored Armenian women and maidens, whose anguish he now could realize. He wiped his eyes and seized a club.

The night had already fallen.

"Where are you going, my son?" asked his old father. "The night is pitch-black; you can expect nothing good, either from heaven or earth."

"I must go away", answered Hairo. "What I have seen I can no longer endure. Does it rain? So much the better. May it rain stones upon my head! Oh, why have I not been stricken mute? I cursed Miko and his deeds, but if the deeds of Miko are accursed whose shall be blessed? Mine? I labor to nourish the Kurds and the Turks, and the officials dishonor my sister."

So saying, Hairo threw his peasant's cap to the ground, knotted a kerchief around his brow, after the fashion of women, and was lost in the darkness and the rain to search for Miko. The rain beat against his face, the wind tangled his hair, but on he went, like the spirit of darkness in search of his prey, like a ghost which the paternal curse drives from the tomb in the terrifying hours of the dark night. Now and again he stumbled, exhausted, in the darkness. He wished that he might change into a flame, to set the world afire, that the military posse and its accursed officials might be consumed. He vowed to be avenged, to wash in death the stain of dishonor upon his sister. It was necessary to find Miko at any cost. For days, for weeks, he wandered; at last he found him and threw himself at his feet.

"I am unfit to live longer, Chief," Hairo groaned. "Kill me and throw my corpse to the dogs; I wish no more of this existence. The people related to me many wrongs, but I did not feel the misery of others. No one had ever wounded me; no one had ever pierced my heart; my sister had not been outraged. Kill me if you will, but avenge the honor of Nazeh. Destroy the military posse, massacre the officials, and thus you will avenge all our outraged Armenian maidens."

His face burned with anguish; he tore his

breast with his nails; it seemed to him that he had been buried in burning coals. He lamented his former ingratitude to Miko and his comrades. Never was contrition more profound and sincere. It was thus that Hairo became a *haidouk*.

"Chief," he repeated often to Miko, "see that I do not die before having beheld with my own eyes the massacre of these ravishers. Then I am willing to die a thousand deaths for you, to go even to the depths of hell, if you wish."

At last the hour of sacred vengeance sounded. It was a dismal night of the late fall. The village of K - - was sunk in a troubled sleep. In those regions sleep is akin to death, so much do the unfortunate people fear the unknown danger which they always feel hovering over them. Nazeh lay with open eyes. Since the outrage and the disappearance of her brother sleep had forsaken her eyelids. She lived only in the hope and expectation of her brother's return. Suddenly the dismal barking of dogs was heard in the distance, and the village dogs responded. That was the only manifestation of life in the village. Then a loud report rent the silence, followed by a fusillade.

Nazeh raised herself upon her bed and listened. With the reports of the guns were now mingled cries from the direction of the military posse. She trembled, feeling instinctively that the turmoil concerned herself.

She arose noiselessly, dressed herself, and opening the door cautiously, mounted to the roof of the house. The military posse was a mass of flame, illuminating all the village. In the light of the conflagration a desperate battle was being fought. The guns thundered ceaselessly, and Nazeh's breasts heaved with the emotion of mingled fear and delight. The thought that Hairo was there, in that combat, perhaps wounded, inspired her with extraordinary courage, and

she was seized with an irresistible desire to be near the fire, near Hairo - - to see with her own eyes the slaughter of her tormentors, to hear their groans and their death-rattle of agony.

She descended from the roof and ran to the military posse. There raged a terrific battle. Some of the officials shrieked in the flames, and others, while seeking to flee, fell under the bullets of the *haidouks*. One of the *haidouks* was distinguished by his ardor in the combat no less than by his cruelty; he was a tall, broad-shouldered peasant who wore a strange headdress, a kerchief knotted around his head, as worn by women. The commands shouted by Miko, the Chief, rang through the air; the faces of the avengers, lighted by the flames,

wore a dreadful aspect. All at once, as a shot rang across the flames, the man in the kerchief reeled and fell, and Nazeh at that instant reached his side and caught him in her arms. Hairo passed his arm tenderly around her neck and embraced her. He was pale; his lips trembled. The girl saw that he leaned more and more heavily upon his elbow. The blood flowed from a wound in his breast. Nazeh pressed her hand upon the gaping wound, and covered his pale brow with kisses. Rapidly his strength failed; and as he threw aside the kerchief that had been his headdress he murmured, "Now I can die; I have vindicated my manhood and avenged your honor!"

(Reprinted from the OUTLOOK,  
October 13, 1915)



### A CORRECTION

"... has transmitted the alloy ..." of Arshag Mahdesian's *A Probable Source of Forty Days of Musa Dagh*, published in the inaugural issue of *The Armenian Review*, should read "... has transmuted the alloy ..."



# A MISSION TO MOSCOW

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## MEMOIRS

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### Part III

By REUBEN DARBINIAN

23.

#### **We Work on Translations**

One day Professor N. Adontz of Petrograd came to see us. When I told him of the callous treatment which had been meted out to me by the Armenian Division of the Commissariat of Nationalities, he promised to find a good job not only for me but for Liparit Nazariantz. In those days Maxim Gorky had persuaded Lenin to authorise a rather ambitious project of translation into Russian and publication of the important literary works of all nations. Lenin, in turn, had charged Gorky with the organizing and directing of the entire project. The project itself which bore the title of "Universal Literature" had two principal divisions: the literatures of the East and the West. The Director of the Eastern Division, Academician Oldenbourgsky, had assigned the translation of Armenian literature to Prof. N. Marr who, in turn, invited Prof. Adontz to assist him.

Under these circumstances, scarcely one week after our interview with Prof. Adontz, Prof. Marr officially offered Liparit and me the task of translating selected works from modern Armenian literature. The work on ancient (Grabar) Armenian literature, he said, would be done by himself and Prof. Adontz, while the modern (Ashkharabar) would be attended by myself, Liparit, Vahan Terian, and P. Makintzian. Upon our assent, he asked us to present him a plan of those books which we felt should be trans-

lated and which we were prepared to undertake.

The very next day we presented the requested plan. Liparit undertook the translation of Raffi's "Samuel," P. Makintzian, Shirvanzadeh's "Chaos," Vahan Terian, Raffi's "Kaitzere" (Sparks), and I, Shirvanzadeh's "Arsen Dimaksian." Compared to the rates prevalent in those days, the pay was more than reasonable, 800 rubles for 40,000 words. However, neither Liparit nor I were in a position to work for two months without an advance pay, and because Prof. Marr had made it clear that an advance pay would be out of the question, we made the following proposal; - - - we would turn in our translations in installments, provided we were paid for each delivery. Marr promised to take up the matter with Academician Oldenbourgsky and meet our demands.

We set to work with enthusiasm. Before the month was over, I had already completed the translation of "Arsen Dimaksian." I turned immediately to Zabel Yessayan's "Vertchin Bajak" (The Last Cup), which likewise I finished with expedition. Thereafter, I completed several short stories. Prof. Marr was carried away by his enthusiasm and was feverishly at work on Moses of Khoren's History of the Armenians. An outstanding scientist, as well as a charming personality, it was a pleasure to meet and speak with him. You could speak with him for days without getting tired.



24.

**Prof. N. Marr**

During the school term of 1918-1919 Professor Marr delivered lectures at the University of Petrograd and the Lazarian Institute of Moscow. He visited Moscow every two weeks where he stayed from three to four days, and invariably he always called on us. In these meetings we used to carry on interesting conversations as he explained to us his scientific views on the history of the Near Eastern races. We used to listen to him for hours with rapture. His scientific lantern in hand, he would lead us into the darkness of the Near East's past, spreading light on all the dark corners of its history and philosophy. His mother a Georgian, his father of Scotch descent, he himself was a typical Russian intellectual. Although not a communist, he was a great patriot. He was not depressed, like all non-communist Russian intellectuals, at sight of the new Bolshevik tyranny. This was perhaps due to the fact that he was not preoccupied with politics, nor he understood politics. He lived in the world of science and culture, as if contemptuous of the stormy political whirlpool which surrounded him. Despite all this, it could easily be discerned that he was not entirely insensitive to the independence of the Causasian nationalities, although even in this, he approached the question from the viewpoint of a scientist, and partly as a Russian patriot.

He would say: "It is absurd, first to separate the Transcaucasus from Russia and convert it into three republics, Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, inasmuch as the culture of Transcaucasia is not national, neither purely Armenian, nor Georgian, nor Azerbaijanian, but is the product of the common life and cooperation of all the peoples of Asia Minor. It is a mistake to separate the Transcaucasus from Russia, as it is an error to separate the Armenian from the Georgian, the Azerbaijanian from the Ar-

menian, and the Georgian from the two. That would mean to endanger the existence of Transcaucasia and to destroy the common source of her creative genius."

—But you forget that that separation is taking place independently of the will of the Transcaucasian peoples, and is the product of the infernal situation created by the Turks and the Bolsheviks.

—That is temporary. The Transcaucasus cannot be permanently separated from Russia, even as peoples of Transcaucasia cannot live independently of one another. And it is not useful that they live separately. Ani, the ancient capital of Armenia, flourished during the reign of Queen Tamara when the Transcaucasian peoples were at the height of their cultural glory. The opinion that the Kingdom of Ani was purely Armenian is absolutely wrong. No, Ani was an Armeno-Georgian state in which the Mohammedan element was an important factor. The brilliant epic of Shota Rustaveli, the greatest creation of the times, was the product of Transcaucasian peoples' cooperative effort. By birth an Armenian, a Georgian in national consciousness, and by religion a Mohammedan, Shota Rustaveli embodied in himself the cultural elements of three nationalities. The peoples of Transcaucasia, and I would include in this all the small peoples of Asia Minor, should create one common state which alone can meet the requirements of their temporal and spiritual demands. On the other hand, should they create separate independent states they will be unable to develop their cultural and creative powers to the maximum.

—As a more or less immediate or remote aim, I objected, such a federation or confederation might prove a great blessing for the peoples of Transcaucasia or even Asia Minor, but just now, confronted as they are by a centuries-old vendetta, a gap which cannot be scanned by one leap, such a project seems exceedingly difficult. In my opinion, the absolute independence of the Trans-

caucasian peoples is an inescapable and a most compelling necessity. Later on, when they become independent, they can form some day a federation. Until they have become independent, nations cannot form stable, enduring federations.

—Can't you see that these peoples are not in a position just now to create independent states for themselves? objected Marr — It is impossible to separate them from one another permanently. Such a notion is a dangerous delusion. Generally speaking, the narrow nationalism of the Caucasian peoples which dominates the Armenian intellectuals, and the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in particular, is positively destructive of their own existence.

—I think, Mr. Marr, you are being unfair to the Armenian intellectuals and the Federation. In the first place, are the Georgian intellectuals, not excepting their Social Democrats, any less chauvinistic in their inclinations than we Armenians or the Dashnags? Why are you carried away by the phraseologies of the Georgians? In words they are Social Democrats or internationalists, but in action they are narrow nationalists, more so than the Dashnags. The chief fault of most Armenian intellectuals has been the lack of any national spirit, or the anti-national airs assumed by the majority of them, and not their narrow nationalism as you believe. This is undoubtedly the result of national degeneracy. Being nationalistic is both healthy and natural. At all events, the Armenian intelligentsia suffers from the lack of nationalistic spirit, rather than extreme nationalism. You will forgive me, esteemed professor, when I say that your own censure is the product of an unsound mentality which, under the cloak of world-citizenship, is a manifestation of Russian imperialistic tendencies to snuff out the healthy nationalistic spirit of the small peoples, by replacing it with Russian nationalism.

But, in spite of his Georgian and Scotch antecedents, Professor Marr was a Russian to the marrow, which accounted for his inability to sympathize with, or comprehend my simple ideas, and explained his fanatical defense of his cosmopolitan ideas which in reality stemmed from the expansionist policies of the great Russian nation. He opposed the independence of the Transcaucasian peoples and advocated their union not because he aspired to their united independence, but in order to see them in united subjection to great Russia.

25.

### K. Kostanian, Director of the Lazarian Institute

Thanks to his personal connections, Professor Marr enjoyed a comparatively favored position. This was not the case, however, with a large number of Russian intellectuals who, like him, although steered clear of political or partisan feuds, thus escaping the Bolshevik persecutions were nevertheless condemned to starvation, at least in the initial stages of the Soviet regime when I was in Russia. Thus, in a short time, one after another, starved to death Prof. Alexey Vesselovsky, Yurye Vesselovsky, and many others. With my own eyes I saw Prof. K. Kostanian, one of our best Armenologists, who directed the Lazarian Institute before the advent of the Bolsheviks, wasting away to a slow death by starvation.

I often called on Kostanian in his residence near the Lazarian Institute where he lived with his wife. He was an old man of 70, thin and small in body. He was exceedingly depressed by the Bolshevik revolution. He was so emaciated in body that he was sick for months from a small cut on the finger, and scarcely escaped a major amputation by merely losing his finger. In his wasted, semi-starved condition, he was neither able to busy himself with his scientific labors, nor live the life which befitted

the dignity of his rank. To drag his and his wife's miserable existence, he was obliged to sell all day long his precious belongings for a pittance, not excepting his manuscripts.

One day I met him on the street near the Institute, and after the customary inquiries about the condition of our fatherland, he said with a deep sigh: "Henceforth, my only wish is to return to my native town of Giumri (Alexandropol, now Leninakan), to become janitor of our Holy Saviour's Church, and die as janitor."

Poor Kostanian was not, however, destined to become even janitor of his native church and to hear once again the sweet tolling of the bells. He could not escape the conflagration of his hated Bolshevism. He was too weak to even make the attempt. A few months after I left Moscow, like many other scientists of common fate, he had starved to death, his longing for his native land buried in his heart.

## 26.

### My Old Teacher

I found my university professor Wipper in the same deplorable condition. Wipper was one of the most distinguished professors in general history in entire Russia, and was the author of many text books on medieval and modern history in secondary schools. Being charged with the translation of his books, and having need of the cuts of his illustrations, I decided to pay him a personal visit and to ask him, incidentally, to write an introduction to my translation, supplemented perhaps by a few more pages on the history of Armenia, particularly in view of the fact that his original text included nothing on Armenia or the Armenians.

Not having his home address, and having learned that he still lectured at the university, I called on him at the latter place. The university, which in my days seethed with life, now seemed desolate. Instead of the thousands of students who formerly milled around the premises, one could now

see only a few hundreds who, like ghosts, stalked through the corridors of the buildings. At first I thought this was but an accident. But on subsequent visits, I saw the same desolation everywhere. One day I came across an attendant of the buildings whom I knew from my student days and asked him why there were so few teachers these days. The servant explained to me that the greater part of the professors omit their lectures on account of the cold, lack of fuel made it impossible to heat the lecture halls. Upon my inquiry about Prof. Wipper, he pointed to a notice pasted on the wall, advising the students that his lectures would be resumed "on the arrival of the warm season."

It was also noteworthy that no one could give me Prof. Wipper's address. All they knew was that the professor's home had been confiscated by the Soviet authorities and he himself was ejected. Where he was living now, no one could tell. After long inquiries and searches, finally I found him in a pitiful hut which, extraordinarily, still survived in the midst of one of Moscow's most fashionable streets. On my knock on the door, there appeared a short, emaciated, pitiful old man clothed in rags whom I took to be the Professor's servant. I was half ready to ask if Prof. Wipper was at home, when suddenly it dawned on me that the man I was facing was the professor himself. His voice dispelled all my lingering doubts. But, my God, how changed was he! I could not believe my eyes that this was the same old professor who used to dress so immaculately, and whose external appearance and gestures used to bear the stamp of such nobility. I felt a keen pang inside. After staring him in the face for a few moments, I finally spoke:

—Perhaps you did not recognize me, I am your former pupil.

And I gave him my name, together with a few details to refresh his memory. He was very glad to see me, and told me he had

heard of my Armenian translations of his books. Upon learning the object of my call, he joyfully volunteered to grant my request. I left him, deeply distressed. It was hard to see this grand old man, so beloved by all in our student days, in such a pitiful condition.

27.

### "The Queues", and Popular Discontent

Every time I passed through the streets of Moscow, I used to meet numerous queues, those long multitudes waiting in line for long hours, and sometimes days, in front of the shops, awaiting their turn for a few dried fish, a piece of bread, or a few yards of cheap linen or cotton goods. This was a curious crowd which a whim of the Bolshevik plague had assembled, throwing together all classes of people. There was always something unpleasant in and around these crowds. Quarrels, fights, and loud noise. All were obviously anti-Bolsheviks, and loudly swore at the new rulers. In the eyes of the mob, these rulers were all "Jews", including Lenin.

—They have forbidden Mesotchnikism—the black market—but they will not move a finger to provide bread for the people, bitterly complained a man who looked like an intellectual.

—The Mesotchniks were our deliverers, but now only those accursed (the Bolsheviks) are free to go to the villages and haul what they want, interrupted another who looked like a door-keeper.

—Only those accursed live the life now. White bread, butter, honey, and what else, joined in a well-dressed woman.

There were voices of assent all around.

On the first anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, the Soviet government regimented all the "modernistic" or "revolutionary" painters, namely the "futurists", and made them paint numerous grotesque paintings to be exhibited on the streets. Among these, striking in their outlandishness, were the paintings plastered on the wooden walls of

Moscow's small shops called "Okhotni Reyad". When on the first anniversary of the Bolshevik revolution, I joined the crowd passing by these shops, I overheard the following characteristic remarks:

—See, how they've smeared our walls? They've plastered them with the pictures of "Jewish" saints!

—Next thing, remarked another, they'll force us to worship after the "Jewish fashion."

—"The Jews" have also killed our Tzar, joined in another, gnashing his teeth.

On another occasion I overheard the following typical conversation among the unprivileged classes of the Russian people:

—The minute we lost the Tzar, everything went wrong.

—The scoundrels respect nothing, neither Tzar, nor church, nor education, nor science.

—Yes, it's true. For example, in our village these bandits drove away our teacher who was a learned, good man, and replaced him with a squaw. That bitch is now supposed to teach our children. Can you imagine what she will teach them?

—Akh. These accursed are doing everything wrong. They've kicked out our officers, and replaced them with corporals. Is this the right way to do things?

—There are very few good men left. All the understanding, cultivated men have fallen from grace. Illiterates like us have now taken over the helm of the ship. It seems God wants to punish us. These bandits command, and we fools carry out their orders.

Similar remarks were a common occurrence in the streets of Moscow. There was an intense, universal resentment against the Jews in particular. To many, the words "Bolshevik" and "Jew" were synonyms. And for a moment, it seemed, this resentment which was deep-rooted and elemental, would have resulted in tragic consequences for the Jews were it not for the swift and peremptory intervention of the Soviet gov-

ernment. The Cheka launched indiscriminate arrests and even shootings of all those who dared speak against the Jews. A Russian intellectual epitomized the common resentment in the following words to me one day:

—What an accursed fate! In our own land we dare not call a Jew by his name!

28.

### "The Blessings" of the Soviet Government

When, after a three months illness, once again I stepped on the streets of Moscow, I was verily terrified. It seemed the whole city had been subjected to a terrible Pogrom. All the shops were closed. Their shelves were emptied. Sometimes only a few pieces of card board, left over goods, and piles of dirt, were the only indications of a once plentiful, prosperous store. The shattered furniture and windows left no doubt that vandal hands had been the cause of this wholesale destruction.

I was sick abed when I read the Soviet decrees about the nationalization of business. I never dreamed that these decrees could in reality have wrought such havoc. To complete the picture, the Bolsheviks had removed all signs and marquees of the stores, without which the city looked completely transfigured and desolate. The most magnificent streets of Moscow, such as Tverskaya, Kouznetzky Most, Nicholskaya, Miasnitskaya, and others were so distorted as to be unrecognizable. Closed were even the coffee houses and restaurants, which a few months later were replaced by a few tea shops scattered hither and yon in the various parts of the city.

Not only in the evenings or at night were the streets empty, but even in the daytime, with the exception of those hours when government clerks or the workers were on their way, or returning from their work. After

4 P.M., (which in reality was 1 P. M., because the Bolsheviks, by a crazy whim, had advanced the clock three hours), all the streets of Moscow were empty. Only at times casual passers by stalked the streets like ghosts. Only one thing was stamped on all faces—Terror! All seemed to be fleeing from something, all were in haste, almost running. Men or women were seen, carrying on their shoulders, or sometimes on small carts, loaded bags or packages, filled with flour, bread, potatoes, or blocks of wood for fuel. It seemed men had no other occupation except to seek something to eat or burn.

On the streets I saw famous professors, writers, artists, who, having shouldered a bag of potatoes, were hurrying home, to save themselves and their families from starvation.

Only after long weeks did the Soviet government open a few stores where, according to public announcement, goods could be procured with special rationing cards. These cards were of four classes: 1. The workers—the most privileged class—whose allowance was more than all other classes; 2. responsible Soviet functionaries; 3. the non-responsible public servants; and lastly, 4. all the remainder, namely, the bourgeoisie and the nobility. With the merging of the first two classes, however, soon the public was divided into three classes. In other words, these very same Bolsheviks who were loudest in their condemnation of the classes, now created new classes even on a simple matter as the dispensation of life's necessities. There were commodities which were accessible only to the first class, namely the workers and public servants. Clothing was one of these.

The system of distribution was exceedingly outlandish and absurd. A good example of this was supplying of paper. For my translation I needed a considerable amount of paper, whereas, my ration was even smaller than that of a common worker. My ration card could scarcely provide one



hundredth part of the paper I needed, and consequently, I was compelled to resort to devious ways, and soon I found out that this was not a difficult thing. The workers sold their quotas of paper (which in reality they never needed) to black market agents, who in turn, sold it to me at exorbitant prices. Thus the Bolsheviks created a new form of profiteering, although they professed to be the avowed enemies of all profiteering.

It should be stated here that many owners of stores which had been nationalized had succeeded in smuggling away considerable quantities of goods which now flooded the black market. And although the Soviet government did its utmost to stamp out the black market, it was never completely successful in the effort. The black market was a sort of refreshing draft in the choking Bolshevik air. In those days, the most notorious black market in Moscow was the Soukharevka, - - - a world by itself, and highly typical of the Soviet order. While before government stores a customer had to wait hours, and sometimes days, for his turn, often to be told that the goods he wanted were sold out, in Soukharevka he could buy whatever he wanted, without a rationing card or without waiting, provided he had either the cash or exchange goods. Furthermore, he could find here such goods which could not be found in the government stores.

But far more important than the goods were the people who resorted to Soukharevka, the buyers and the sellers. This crowd represented the true picture of the gigantic social revolution which had taken place in the land. You met here workers and men with ties with Soviet stores who sold the surpluses of the former, and the stolen goods by the latter. You also met here profiteers by profession who traded in hidden, bought, or stolen goods. Lastly, there were the former "bourgeoisie," who sold whatever they had salvaged from Bolshevik confiscations,—

furniture, utensils, linen, and clothes. This latter were the most striking of all. You saw here pale, emaciated women, and men who sold their old clothes and hats. They all had something to sell, in order to drag their miserable existence a little longer. Some of them were quite bold and drove fearless bargains; it was obvious that they were veterans at it. But there were also the novices who were somewhat bashful in their role. All of them were, however, famished men who the minute they sold their articles, hastened to buy a piece of bread or some "Pirojky" (meat pie) to satisfy their hunger.

The most striking among these elements were the Soviet public servants,—the communists and their wives or mistresses—the so-called "new rich", who always carried cash. These bought in large quantities. But their numbers were none too great. The bulk of the buyers were half-starved men who were ready to sell their last shirt to partly satisfy their eternal hunger. In such a crowd, naturally, the pick-pockets did a thriving business, and thefts of a most daring and unconscionable nature were not an uncommon occurrence. Once these pick-pockets took away from my wife a piece of precious cloth which she had taken to Soukharevka with which to buy some bread and meat. On another occasion, after having purchased some meat, as I was paying the cash, they stole the meat from my shopping bag, and I was never able to find the thief.

29.

### Preparation for Departure

By the beginning of August, 1919, having paid all my debts, we began to make preparations to leave for the Caucasus. We decided to proceed first to Kiev which at the time was the direct object of Denikin's (anti-Bolshevik) troops. If we arrived at the

city early enough, we figured the Bolsheviks already would have fled, and the coast would be clear to continue our journey to the Caucasus. But it was impossible to leave Moscow without considerable official red tape. We could of course obtain our passports by bribery, but that would need large sums, while my entire wealth consisted of the 5,000 rubles Dr. Zavriev had dug up for me,—a sum which scarcely sufficed for our fare to the Caucasus. Under the circumstances, I decided to apply to Sahak Ter Gabrielian. I explained to him that I could no longer stay in Moscow and that I needed a warmer climate to restore my shattered health, and I begged him to find a way so my wife and I could go to Kiev and then proceed to the south. When Gabrielian heard my request, he smiled. He had no doubt understood my real aim. He approved of my decision, and after a moment's thinking, he said:

—Although it's very difficult, I'll try to do what I can. I only beg you not to tell a thing of this to our Bolsheviks. Remember, if they should have an inkling of this, both you and I are lost.

A week later he informed me that it was impossible to go to Kiev by usual passenger train just now because he could not obtain the necessary official papers for such a trip. The only way, in his opinion, was that I take a military train. In that case, the sole obstacle would be my wife, but he promised to take care of that little matter, too, if I only agreed to his proposal. Having no other recourse, after a consultation with my wife and my friends, I decided to take his advice. The same day Gabrielian informed me that two days later a military train would leave for Kiev.

—You must at once go to Tverskaya, N14, and see the chief of the military train. He is a young officer named Dvornikov. I have already spoken to him about you. Just

present yourself to him and get the details of the departure. Oh yes, I forgot to tell you that you must appear in a military uniform.

—But I have no military uniform. Where shall I be able to get hold of one? Do you suppose Dvornikov might lend me one?

—No. You yourself must find one. Don't dare speak to him about it. Perhaps you can get one from the store house of the Lazarian Institute. The present keeper is one of your friends from Baku who is not a Bolshevik. I think you can trust him. (He gave me his name.)

—I'll try. But you didn't tell me if Dvornikov will let my wife accompany me in the military train.

—He would not even hear of it, but in the end I think I persuaded him.

—That's what you think, but suppose he refuses?

—It's well that you speak to him personally. I am sure he will not refuse. Now go at once, don't delay.

I lost no time calling on Dvornikov who received me cordially. I at once understood that Gabrielian had not told him I was not a Bolshevik. I, too, kept mum, of course. The mission of the military train to Kiev, Dvornikov informed me, in view of the Bolshevik army's inability to hold the city, was to remove all valuable portable effects. He also told me the train would leave on August 16, exactly at noon, and gave me the number of my car.

—Pardon me, Comrade Dvornikov, I interrupted, Comrade Gabrielian has of course told you that my wife will accompany me.

—Oh, that will be very difficult.

—How so? Is it possible that nothing was said to you about this? I could not very well leave my wife behind. Her parents are

in Kiev and she must surely accompany me.

—But how can a woman be accepted in a military train which is headed for the battle front?

Finally, upon my importunity, he said, "Very well let her come to the station provided she will appear in a peasant woman's dress."

I dug up a military uniform from the store house of Lazarian Institute, and my wife, with the assistance of her sister, fixed up a peasant woman's dress. After our preparations were completed, on August 16, at 10 o'clock in the morning, we bade farewell to Dr. Zavriev, Liparit, my sister, her husband, and a few of our close friends, and left for the station.

### 30.

#### Our Departure from Moscow

In the uniform of a Red Army officer I was completely unrecognizable, so was my wife in her "peasant woman's" dress. Wishing to give us a personal send-off, Dr. Zavriev met us at the station. After one hour, the order was given to proceed to our cars. We had no difficulty in locating ours which was nothing but a freight box wagon, as were all the others. Dvornikov, who had seen me in the crowd, immediately approached and ordered his soldiers to carry our suit cases. After packing the suit cases, I helped my wife board the train, then stepped down to bid Dr. Zavriev farewell.

At that moment Dvornikov, having seen my wife standing in the wagon door, immediately approached me and ordered that she come down.

—How come, I asked him, didn't you promise me you'd arrange so she could accompany me?

—Yes, but I see that's impossible now. I myself want to take along my wife but I can't. It would be a scandal if the soldiers saw it. Besides, the soldiers use profane

language and carry vulgar manners. In short, this is not the place for a woman.

No matter how much I begged him, he was adamant. But just when I was about to give up, Dr. Zavriev came over and started to persuade Dvornikov. The words of the charming and venerable physician obviously had their effect, because Dvornikov suddenly turned to me and said: "All right, let her in, but see to it that she boards the train after the second bell, so the soldiers will not see her."

In front of the cars there was a terrific medley of milling men and boistrous voices. Before each wagon stood a commissar with a revolver in hand. Finally the second bell struck and we bade farewell to our beloved doctor whose eyes were filled with tears. We stepped inside. A few minutes later the third bell struck and the train started to move. I heard Zavriev's parting words: "Good bye. Now that you're going I am happy. In less than three days Liparit and I too, will leave for abroad."

Our poor friend did not know, however, that he would never leave Moscow. After our departure, he had been unable to persuade Liparit to leave at once, nor himself had been able to leave Moscow through regular channels. One could only imagine his suffering, impatient and excited as he was, being doomed to stay in Moscow when he was deeply convinced that he could be useful to his nation if he were in Paris, where in those days the Peace Conference was in session. Before long, he had been infected with typhus and had closed his eyes forever in the same hospital where he had served as chief physician after his release from prison. Months later, when Mrs. K. Yeghiazarian, who had managed to arrive in Baku, learned that Dr. Zavriev had died, she took poison to end her life.

31.

## As Far as Ukraina

When the train pulled out an infinite lightness filled my whole being. I was so happy at last to be leaving Moscow where although years before I had spent my unforgettable student days, but now life was so intolerable under the choking Bolshevik regime. After having been confined in an iron chest for fully a year and a half, and now miraculously saved, it seemed I was suddenly being turned out into a world of light. After long, long months, it seemed for the first time I was seeing anew nature's beauties, and drawing into my lungs the fresh, free air.

I watched with rapture the verdant woods and orchards which flitted by at the train's swift flight, and a strange sense of sorrow like a compunction filled my soul toward all those who were left behind at the mercy of Moscow's new despots.

"Poor people," I mused, "how long will you be able to endure this nightmarish regime which has trampled under foot everything which you hold sacred, has robbed you of all the charm and sweetness of life, and has reduced you to abject slaves!"

At Dvornikov's orders, my wife and I had been assigned a wooden bench in a corner of the box car, close to the window. We two had stretched ourselves on a light blanket, my wife next to the window, and I beside her. We kept peering out of the window, meanwhile involuntarily listening to the conversation of our neighbors. In spite of our fears, the train was making good speed, and we already had left behind many villages and towns which before the revolution had served as summer resorts for the well-to-do of the capital. No longer could be seen the former crowds of well-dressed women and men; no longer the former captivating hustle and bustle. "Will that former prosperous life ever come back, or are those days gone forever?" I asked myself, and an inner voice sadly whispered to me, "That which was be-

fore will never, never again return. When the storm is passed, a new life will begin which will be wholly unlike the former."

I was in the midst of these meditations when the train came to a sudden halt. We had arrived at a station. Presently, our company was joined by a strikingly attractive, charming young lady. She was followed by Dvornikov who took a seat with her at the other end of our bench. The presence of the young lady injected new life among the passengers who now started to laugh and crack jokes. The company in our wagon included two important personalities, both Bolsheviks, one a Russian and the other a Jew. Conversation in the wagon was rather free inasmuch as everyone thought all of them were Bolsheviks. We passed station after station, and every where we stopped the soldiers in our wagon stepped out to rake up something to eat but who invariably returned empty-handed. Not only there were no restaurants at the stations, but not even any kind of food. The only thing the soldiers could find was hot water for tea. The night passed without incident and we both slept well. When we woke up, we were told that we had already entered the border of Ukraina. After a couple of stops, our train had a long wait of several hours. We were waiting for another military train which was to overtake us. After it had passed us, our train resumed its journey. But at the next stop, a place called Tereschenskaya, our train had even a longer wait.

Our supply having been consumed, I stepped out with the soldiers in search of some food. I bought a loaf of bread with great difficulty, after paying 30 rubles. The peasants were willing enough to offer us eggs, chicken, and even honey, but only in exchange for salt and clothing; they would not take money. The soldiers parted with their shirts, shoes, and even their upper clothes for a fried chicken, some eggs, or a little honey with which to satisfy their hunger.

New troop trains arrived, stopped for a few minutes, and left, but our train still stood motionless. Our soldiers left one by one for the neighboring village and returned with scanty victuals. I tried the same thing several times but before I had gone half way I returned hastily for fear the train might suddenly leave. My efforts to find out why our train was detained this long were likewise futile. Darkness fell, but we still were there. Thoroughly fatigued by my trips, I stretched myself on the sofa but rest had deserted me. In vain I tried to sleep. Disturbing thoughts flashed across my mind. Could it be that something had happened and we would never be able to reach Kiev? If so, what were we going to do? My wife was tormented by similar thoughts and kept asking questions. I tried to quiet her down, of course.

## 32.

## Two Jews

We were particularly worried over the decision of our Jewish friend to return to Moscow when only yesterday he had been so avid about the many important things he had to do in Kiev. As near as we could make out, he had changed his mind as result of his talks with acquaintances whom he met from incoming trains from Kiev. He now openly told Dvornikov and the Russian Commissar that it was useless for him further to proceed to Kiev but the latter listened to his apologies with misgivings. It was obvious that the Jew was in possession of some bad news and was anxious to run away to the north as soon as possible.

This curly-haired, round-faced, bespectacled youth with large ears was a typical Bolshevik commissar who had an important post in Moscow, probably a member of the Moscow Council. An attorney by profession, he was quite an eloquent man. He talked constantly of persecutions to which, as a Jew, he had been subjected in Kiev in

Tsarist days. He invariably monopolized the conversation. He told of his life, and related such details which had no bearing on his idealism, although he was prolific in his use of Bolshevik clichés. "The salvation of the Jew is in the triumph of Bolshevism," he kept repeating.

Nor did we miss the cold and scarcely-concealed sarcastic attitude which the Russian Bolsheviks of our wagon displayed toward this Jewish Bolshevik, but the latter accepted this as a matter of fact and never betrayed his bitterness in spite of the provocations of his Bolshevik comrades. Comrades in idealism and in politics, yet how far they were in their mentality and feelings! The poor Jew really felt like an orphan among them, so helpless and so alone. He often cast melancholy glances in our direction, as if seeking for some sympathy from us who were non-Russians, and who, as such, understood him better than did the Russians.

Whenever incoming trains from Kiev stopped at our station, our Jew stepped out of the wagon, and finding some Jews among the newcomers, he would whisper things to them with mysterious gestures. Obviously these conversations were responsible for his decision to return to Moscow, instead of keeping on to Kiev. Both my wife and I were saddened by his decision because, aside from the young lady, he had been the life of our party. Without him, ours would be a most boring journey.

At the Terenschenskaya station our Jew introduced me to one of his kinsmen who was on his way to a town called Crolevetz (in the Province of Chernigov) where his wife was staying with his sister. The latter was married to a local physician. This second Jew wanted to move his wife back to Moscow. To my question why particularly Moscow where food was so scarce, he replied that he was afraid of a Jewish massacre. He was convinced that once the



Volunteer (White) army entered Crolevetz it would surely stage a massacre of the Jews there. When I tried to dispel his fears by expressing my doubts about a massacre, he said to me: "No, no, you don't know these Russians. They will surely stage a pogrom. They all hate the Jews. If it were not for our (Soviet) government, a massacre would be inevitable. And, finally, I myself am a Ukrainian and know better than you how tense are Russo-Jewish relations. In this country the Jew hates the Russian, while the latter cannot stand the Jew and is ready to throttle him any minute, were it not for his fear of punishment. Oh, no, Denikin's volunteers will never save us. My wife and I must leave these parts before they arrive."

My conversant was a gentleman of nearly forty, of medium height and slender with a large nose and a massive sharp face, wearing a ludicrously broad-rimmed hat. His large rolling eyes reflected terror.

"You don't know, don't know what terrible things will take place here. The Jews must get away from these parts as soon as possible. If they don't no one will escape from the hands of those beastly Russians."

—But where will they flee?

—To Moscow.

—But isn't it true that those 'beastly' Russians are in Moscow, too?

—Yes, but our Soviet government is there and no one will dare stage a Jewish pogrom there. Just now Moscow is the safest place in all Russia for the Jews.

### 33.

#### The Fateful Night

It was deep night. After long restlessness we had scarcely fallen asleep when suddenly I heard Dvornikov's voice. I woke up with a start. It was he, speaking to his aide. I was terror-stricken as I listened to his words.

"I was at the station just now when they handed me a telegram addressed to all sta-

tion-masters as far as Briansk. The order is to stop all trains to the south, to Kiev. The Red troops are retreating and Kiev will be evacuated soon. In ten minutes our train will be headed back for Briansk and on to Moscow."

We could hardly have expected a more unpleasant shocking news. Without fully weighing the fateful implications of this sudden news, I at once sensed that our plan of escape was done for, and that my wife and I were headed for a terrible uncertainty. There was no time to mull over details. We had to act at once, without the loss of a moment. My wife who had been listening in on the conversation, thinking I was still asleep, wanted to awaken me, but I instantly jumped down from the bench and said to her,

—In ten minutes our train will be headed for Moscow. Either we go, or we step out here, in the hope of finding a way to the south. Speak up. What are we going to do?

—I will never go back, no matter what happens, my wife said with finality.

Instantly I helped her step out of the wagon, I threw out our effects and followed after. It was a dark night. Our wagon was quite a little ways from the station. We trudged along, dragging our luggage. A dim light shone from the station building. Stopping on the way, I cast off my military uniform and donned my civilian clothes which I kept in my suit case. Finally we reached the station platform which was filled with a milling crowd. They looked like ghosts, pacing to and fro or sitting on their luggage, conversing softly.

We found a spare corner where we deposited our luggage. I made my wife sit on a suit case while I wandered around, hoping to overhear something which might give us a ray of hope. I had taken scarcely a few steps when I encountered the Jew who had been introduced to us. His sil-

houette was so striking that I could not mistake him even in the semi-darkness.

—What are you doing here? he asked me surprised.

—Our train is going back, so my wife and I stepped out. Just now I am at a loss to know what to do, especially because there are no trains to Kiev where we want to go.

—Do you want to join us as far as Crolevetz? It's the next station, approximately 30 versts from here. We could walk it, in case we can't find a carriage. Crolevetz is on the way to Kiev and is a better spot from which to proceed to the south.

—Traveling by foot is difficult for us. We have our luggage, and besides there's my wife who is not strong enough for long trips by foot.

—In that case we can hire a peasant cart for the luggage and your wife while you and I can travel on foot. Furthermore, if you do not intend to stay in Crolevetz but want to keep on down south to your fatherland in Caucasus, in that case I advise you to wait in Crolevetz. You are not Jews so they won't touch you. When the Volunteers (whites) arrive, you can make a short cut to the Caucasus. As I told you before, I have a brother-in-law in Crolevetz, Dr. Orloff who can advise and help you. We'll go together and consult him. After that, you can decide what to do next.

Finding the Jew's proposition quite sensible, I agreed to join him in the morning. Our two tries to reach a nearby village to hire a carriage proved futile, and once we scarcely escaped being jailed by the Red Guards, a circumstance which would have been exceedingly dangerous for us, inasmuch as I had already destroyed my Soviet papers of identification. The second time we escaped thanks to the Jew's convincing passport. It turned out that he was a member of the Moscow Soviet.

### To Crolevetz

The passengers who had snuggled in various corners during the night were up early in the morning. Many of them had come from the north and, like us, were in search of a way to proceed southward. They gathered in groups, and discussed what roads led to Chernigov, Kiev, or Poltava. I approached one of the groups which proved to be Georgians, mostly former soldiers. Through the mediation of Yenoukidze, a Bolshevik leader of Moscow, they had obtained passports to the Caucasus, although, being of military age, they were subject to the Red Army call. They were talking to a Ukrainian who advised them to take a ship on the Desna River as far as Chernigov, then on to Kiev. A branch line of the railroad from the Station of Tereshchenskaya to the River Desna was still operating.

This new plan seemed more attractive than the one the Jew had suggested, but there was no guarantee that there would be ship service on the Desna at this time. Should this be the case, we would have made a greater deviation from our original route. Besides, Chernigov being a large city, we might have trouble with the Soviet authorities there. Finally, the Georgians struck me as rather unreliable and I deemed it the better part of wisdom not to tie our fate with theirs.

When I left the group, I met a Russian who was busy in a similar search. He was dressed like a factotum of old Moscow and looked like a man of a very humble station. When informed I was headed for Kiev, he told me that's where he was going and without further ado proposed that we make the trip together. At first he was inclined to take the Desna route but I soon convinced him in favor of the Crolevetz route. We went to the village where we succeeded in hiring a cart for 600 rubles. The peasant owner, however, refused to come to the station for

fear the Bolsheviks might seize his cart and, consequently, we agreed to start the trip from his house. When back at the station we were picking our luggage, we were joined by Dvornikov's young lady who wanted to join us as far as Kiev where, as she said, her parents lived.

At the last moment the Jew joined us, but when he saw the two Russians with us, he trumped up a pretext and left us. It was obvious that he did not want to travel with the hated Russians. We were very sorry for him but there was nothing we could do about it. Our cart was all ready and, besides, we had given our word to the Russians.

Our peasant was a short man of nearly 60, with a white beard, and sly but kindly eyes. He at once ordered his wife to set the Samovar boiling and rustle up some food because, as he explained, we have a long trip and must have full stomachs. We soon discovered that we could buy from him bread, milk, and honey at very reasonable prices, and while we were busy devouring our precious victuals, the old man harnessed his horses to the cart. It was 10 o'clock when we set out.

Our route ran parallel and very close to the railroad. Only in two places we had a slight detour through the woods. On our way we met a company of Hungarians, prisoners of war, who had fled from Siberia on foot and were on their way to their fatherland of Hungary. They had a story full of adventures. They had first been forced to fight in Kolchak's army against the Reds, and later in the Red army against Kolchak's Whites. They had run the hazard of execution by both sides, and had miraculously been saved both times by resorting to escape. Now they were hurrying to run away from the Bolshevik rule to their homeland. During the two years of their captivity they had acquired a fair speaking knowledge of the Russian language.

We were quite surprised by the gay and

carefree disposition of these prisoners, as well as their audacity to undertake such a long and perilous journey without funds. But, having already escaped several battlefronts, they did not seem so very concerned about crossing another in order to reach their homeland.

—We hope to reach home in two months, they said to us, as if all that was left was a matter of two days. They walked at a fast clip. After keeping pace with us for a short while, they left us behind.

We passed many long trains along the way, all full of troops and all kinds of supplies. They were all headed for the north, toward Briansk and Moscow. We did not see a single train headed for the south. Only in one place we stopped for an hour, to drink milk, and to resume our journey. My wife was seated in the cart most of the time, but the Russian young lady soon left her seat and joined us on foot. Neither she nor the other Russian were Bolsheviks, although they had seen service in Bolshevik ranks. We kept talking about the events of the day or our next steps as we walked along. Our road which passed through the woods was quite pleasant. It was the first time in two years that I found myself in nature's bosom, and I wanted to keep on walking and walking until I reached my fatherland.

The endless line of trains headed for the north left no doubt that the Bolsheviks were fleeing in panicky haste. Who knows, we thought, perhaps that very night, or on the morrow we would find ourselves on that side of the civil battle front from where on nothing could separate us from our homeland! By now we were at the outskirts of Croleventz. Presently, there came along an unusually long train which swiftly passed us, consisting wholly of passenger coaches, which was an exceedingly rare thing in these days. We learned from travelers that this was the staff of the 14th Red Army, making its escape to the north.

## 35.

**Our First Lodging**

Toward sunset we arrived at Crolevetz which was no different than a big Russian village. One could see on every hand the usual Russian huts, with roofs covered with reeds. Occasionally the eye could see a brick house with tin roofs painted red. The main street was approximately two versts in length. In the center was a square, and here was the town hotel with no more than two or three rooms in all. We decided to spend the night here. The owner of the hotel was a Jew of nearly 50. Quite inadvertently, on every occasion, he tried to convince us that he was not a Jew but an Orthodox Christian. He informed us that all the Bolshevik commissars had already left the town, leaving behind only a few secondary Reds, and that in a day or two Denikin's army was expected to enter the town.

When he learned that my wife and I were natives of Caucasus, he smiled slyly and said: "In that case, soon the roads will be open for you, too." We asked for a samovar and a dozen eggs. Our hotel was located opposite the town park where a large crowd was gathered, listening to a small orchestra playing Ukrainian tunes. Life seemed to be perfectly normal in this little town. Needless to say this was a happy, as well as an astounding surprise for us. Not far away there was taking place a bloody fratricidal battle, the Bolsheviks were fleeing, Denikin's forces were advancing, perhaps to enter the town that very night or on the morrow, while the people continued to enjoy themselves as if nothing unusual was taking place.

When the samovar was served, it was already dark. We drank our tea, ate our scanty food such as bread and eggs, and retired for the night. My wife and the Russian young lady remained in the room while the Russian gentleman and I withdrew to

the opposite room. After we had retired, my companion confided to me that he no longer could keep his identity a secret. His name was Ivan Grigorevich Petrov, a naval officer who was going to Alexandrovsk, near Crimea, where his family lived. He began to tell me the story of all his adventures, but being very tired, I scarcely could follow him. He was coming from Archangel which he had left a year before. His story was interesting, but in spite of all my efforts to keep awake, I suddenly fell asleep.

My companion, who apparently had had a sleepless night, got up early and waking me said: "Get up, quick, it's just the time for the bazaar. If we delay another hour we shall find nothing." We had to go to the bazaar for our groceries, because our hotel keeper charged us double or triple prices for the same commodities. Soon we were at the bazaar. The vendors were largely peasant women. Their goods lay on the ground—eggs, butter, honey, peas, bread, beans, milk, corn, apples, pears, etc. Needless to say that morning we had a gorgeous breakfast—butter, honey, eggs, and plenty of bread. We had never had such a hearty meal in long, long months.

The residents of the town told us that if we hurried we might find a place in the next train which transported locomotive fuel from Konotop to Kiev, but we were so carried away with butter and honey that when we arrived at the station we were already too late. After three hours of waiting we saw a locomotive making ready for Konotop, but what with the combined luggage of our Russian friend and ours, there would be no room for the four of us, and consequently only the Russian young lady boarded the locomotive. Whether or not she arrived at her destination I do not know, because the next day we were informed that Denikin's planes had bombarded the railway and the station of Konotop, killing and wounding many.

After that, for two or three days, early in the mornings we repaired to the station to see if we could catch a train to the south, or to get news of the battle front which was not far from us. This was the general picture. Konotop, the next station immediately to the south of Crolevetz, was under constant attacks by the troops of Denikin while the Bolsheviks were fleeing pell mell. Freight trains from Kiev, loaded with soldiers, commissars, ammunition supplies, foodstuffs, furniture, utensils, and various household articles, were hustling to the north. Often, the doors of the wagons being open, the curious observer could see some highly interesting sights, such as a proletarian commissar luxuriously ensconced on a gorgeous armchair or a sofa, looted no doubt from a bourgeois, smoking his cigar, while a few paces away his wife was busy preparing tea. On a table covered with a snow white tablecloth was a steaming silver samovar. A keener observation would show inside the wagon such luxuries as a piano, or pieces of precious furniture, all no doubt seized from bourgeois homes.

Sometimes we passed by closed wagons and could hear popular Russian airs or the sound of tap dancing.

"It then means, I thought, that these people have a very good reason for taking along their loot with them. Why then proceed to the south where we shall surely be subjected to fresh hardships? Would it not be better to wait here until the arrival of Denikin's troops when the way will be open as far as the Caucasus? Even if there should be a train to Konotop, it would be unwise to move until the arrival of Denikin. As to hiring a carriage, that too is out of the question. They would charge at least 2,000 rubles, and that was the sum total of our entire earthly wealth. If we spent our entire fortune to go to Konotop, then what?"

I shared these apprehensions with Ivan

Grigorevich but he was entirely of a different opinion.

—We must at once go to Konotop and even farther, he argued. It's exceedingly dangerous to remain here, more dangerous than departing. If we can't go by train, we'll hire a carriage. If we stay, the situation may worsen, and who knows, what all may happen here?

Although I was unable to win over my Russian companion, at least I succeeded in injecting a doubt in his mind as to the advisability of immediate departure.

—You are alone, Ivan Gregorevich, I said to him, and, as it seems, you are not without funds. You may thus escape unnecessary perils. But I am not alone, and I am shackled in my movements far more than you. Besides, I have much less money than you. If you are in such a hurry you can leave alone. Why do you necessarily want to tie your fate with ours?

But apparently our Russian companion didn't want to part with us; it seemed he felt safer in our company.

### 36.

#### Our Hut and Landladies

The fourth day of our stay in Crolevetz we learned that the Bolsheviks had blown up the great railway bridge across the River Seym on the way to Konotop. That put the damper on our plans to travel by rail. After a consultation, my wife and I decided to wait a while longer until the situation was cleared. We could no longer stay at the hotel which was both costly and too public. We had to find an obscure hut where we could be more or less in hiding. When I told Ivan Gregorevich of our final decision, he blew up: "Now it's too late to leave,—he exploded—We should have left at least two days ago. Now that they have blown up the bridge there's nothing left but to wait." He said he would go to the station to get the latest news, and begged us to rent



a room for him too. "Better have no dealings with the Jews," he added, "there will surely be a pogrom and we don't want to become martyrs of a jackass (be needlessly sacrificed)."

My wife and I stepped out in search of rooms. But when we asked the residents, they would smile at us, saying:

"There are plenty of free rooms now. All the houses are empty. The Bolsheviks have fled leaving behind the very best houses. No one wants to return to these vacated houses. You can walk in and take over."

—How so? we asked in surprise, if the Bolsheviks have fled, what about the owners of these houses?

—That's just it. The owners, too, have fled.

—Where?

—To Denikin.

—But they can return.

—Yes, of course.

—No, we cannot live in those houses. It's better that you showed us some rooms whose owners are still here.

After a few hours search we finally found a small hut, the property of a Ukrainian widow, and rented two rooms. These were quite well furnished rooms for a neat little hut with walls of white plaster. We were to pay 200 rubles a month. The landlady agreed to give us daily two samovars of boiling water, and do our cooking. The hut itself, although very attractive inside, had a very poor exterior and hardly noticeable. This was just what we wanted. Besides, our Ukrainian landlady could be of great help to us in case of an anti-Jewish uprising. A small yard and a vegetable garden completed the premises. In the backyard was another small hut which housed an 80 year old woman together with her daughter. Our landlady was a quite handsome, tall, and able-bodied woman, with a slightly manly frame and movements. Her husband had died ten years before and she herself had

brought up and educated her only son, a youth of twenty who now served in the Red Army. With her lived her 70 year old sister, unmarried, who was the contrast of her younger sister in looks and disposition. She was a short emaciated woman, with a bent back, and a face hidden in wrinkles which was made attractive by a pair of infinitely good eyes. She was a meek, virtuous, and godly woman who toiled from early morning till night, bore with Joblike patience her sister's insults, carried out her orders with uncomplaining submissiveness, and generally carried herself as her servant. This poor woman had no other consolation in life except religion.

It was our fate to live with these two sisters for nearly two months because Denikin's soldiers could not cross the Seym River which separated us from the south, while the Bolsheviks reassembled their forces and entrenched their positions on the other side of the Seym, 10-15 kilometers south of Crolevetz. From our courtyard we could clearly hear the constant roar of cannon while our hearts accelerated their beat because, we knew, our salvation depended on the outcome of that battle. We were confident, however, that Denikin's forces eventually would conquer because we had seen the panicky flight of the Bolsheviks, their complete demoralization, and we did not think much of their military ability.

Our landlady's niece, an exceedingly clever peasant girl, often called on her auntie, bringing along bread and butter which we bought, as well as the latest news which circulated in the town. The second day of our stay in our newly-found hut, this girl informed us that the remaining few Bolshevik commissars of Crolevetz had issued orders that the next day, early in the morning, all those in the service of the Soviet must retreat with them to the north. Those who tried to escape would be regarded as traitors and would be shot.

The town was in terror. One had a daughter, another a wife who was in Soviet service and therefore must leave, whereas the father or the husband could not very well leave his house and depart with them. Another had a son in the Soviet service who likewise should leave but his mother or his wife could not join him together with their children. And thus, the father or the mother were forcibly separated from their children, their wives, or their husbands.

It was no wonder that Crolevetz was in a turmoil. Those who had any connection with the Soviets hid themselves in the village or the neighboring woods to avoid accompanying the Bolsheviks.

Among these was the fiance of our peasant girl who, of course, did not want to go, but was afraid, because in case he was captured he would be shot. The poor girl cried and asked our advice.

(To be continued)

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## WIND SONG

HASMICK VARTABEDIAN GOODELL

*Wind hath no form, but  
Wind hath a voice;  
Sometimes caressing  
Sometime a storm.  
Like Wind I came, and  
Like it I go  
Back to the formless  
Essence I know.*

# SOME CONTRIBUTIONS OF ARMENIANS TO WORLD CULTURE

By PROF. VAHAN TOTOMIANTZ

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Currently residing in Bulgaria, the author of this article, a scholar of note, has devoted his life to the cooperative movement in which he is recognized as one of the world's leading authorities. This article is a synopsis of the author's larger work, *The Contribution of the Armenians to World Civilization*, an English translation of which was published some years ago in the *Hairenik Weekly*. Latest information received from Bulgaria reports that Prof. Totomiantz, now about 70 years of age, is living in poverty and want.

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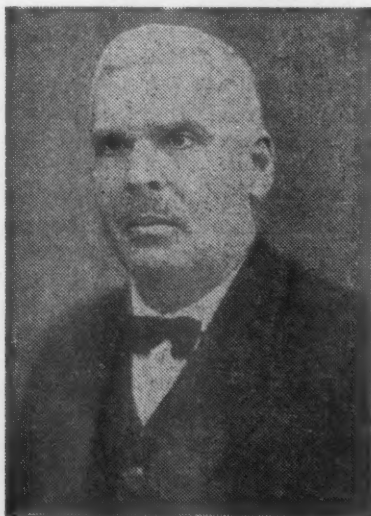
It is a known fact that the Armenian people of today are the descendants of an ancient and honorable people. To the uninitiated, the Armenians, who are mentioned by Xenophon and other early writers, would seem to have derived their name from one *Aram*, an ancient Armenian king. In antiquity, however,—that is in the time of Babylon and Assyria—, Armenia was known as *Nairi* and *Urartu*. Mt. *Ararat*, on which, according to the Holy Scriptures, the Ark of Noah came to rest, received its name from the state title *Urartu*.

The Armenians were the first nation to accept Christianity. The story goes that Jesus Christ sent his Apostles Thaddeus, Bartholomew and Thomas to visit Armenian King Abgar who resided in Edessa, a city later destroyed in a violent earthquake. These emissaries bore a letter addressed to that king, and an image of the Saviour. When, in 301 A.D., Armenia proclaimed Christianity as its state religion, it became the first nation in history to do so. More than a century later, in 434, the Holy Bible was translated into the Armenian by Catholicos Sahak, and the learned doctor Mesrob,\* who had invented the Armenian alphabet in 404, and who later went on to neighboring Georgia where he aided the

people of that nation to form a particular alphabet of their own. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, two early Christian Fathers, were of Armenian origin, although their life work was done among the Greeks of Constantinople. Their learned instructor in philosophy and rhetoric, moreover, was the celebrated Prohairesios,\* a Christian Armenian scholar and orator who, in the 4th

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\*In Armenian "Barouyr"—ED.



PROF. TOTOMIANTZ

\* This translation is known as "The Queen of Translations," so perfect and faithful is it.—ED.

century, taught in the lyceums of Athens, and whose fame became so widespread that pagan Rome erected a statue in his honor which bore the following inscription:

*"Rome, Queen of the World  
To Prohairesios, King of Eloquence!"*

In addition, the Armenians were the first nation to create a distinctive type of church architecture and to construct stone bridges of extraordinary solidity. By 303 A.D., the Cathedral of Etchmiadzin, which to this date serves as the residence of the Catholics of all Armenians, had been erected.

In agriculture, such products as the apricot, which bears the name *prunus armeniae*, as well as the cherry, were originally from Armenia.

It is not surprising that the acceptance of Christianity not only drew Armenia farther from the pagan nations and later from the Mohammedans, who were their neighbors, but caused several wars, especially with Persia. What was still more fatal to the Armenians, however, was that their nation extended at one time from the shores of the Black and Caspian Seas as far as the Mediterranean, or directly across the route of the great barbarian invasions. The incursion of the Mongols, led at first by Jenghis Khan, the conqueror of Russia, and later by Timurlane, struck a formidable blow at Armenia and resulted in the opening of the emigration of Armenians to foreign climes. The Turkish invasion rendered imminent the fall of Armenian independence which finally occurred when Cilicia, on the shores of the Mediterranean, was destroyed and its last king was thrown a refugee in France. One century later, in the 15th century, Byzantium was taken by the Turks but only because other European nations refused to aid it, deeming it wise to render it and the Roman Empire feeble. Later, Europe was to pay dearly for this course of action, for the Turks cut through to Vienna,

destroying everything in their path.

The Armenian emigration of the 6th century directed itself towards the capital city of the Byzantine Empire, and the Armenians were to play an important and varied role in the life of that state. One might even say that on certain occasions Byzantium was nothing more than a stereotype of Armenia. Armenian architects and craftsmen built churches, mansions, bridges and roads, and that which the Turks offer today as their own work is in reality the result of the genius of Armenian emigres.

From 583 to 1028, the Armenians gave to Byzantium no less than twenty-five emperors and twelve empresses, most prominent among whom were Heraclius, Basil I, Constantine, Basil II, John Tsimisches and the Empress Theodora.

Byzantine general Nerses, whom history records erroneously as Narses, was an Armenian. In the 6th century, this man, while serving as the governor of Italy, saved that country from Germanic invasions. Still another Armenian general who fought for Byzantium with distinguished success against the Arabs was one John (Gourgen).

The Armenians have shown the way to the Turks in agriculture, the trades and also in typography. They have played an even more important role in Egypt to which, among other figures, they gave the great reformer, Prime Minister Nubar Pasha.

The sympathy shown by the Armenians to Christian Russia no more than aggravated their relations with the Turks. In the Russian wars against Persia and Turkey, many Armenian generals played a leading role. Among these we may mention Prince Madatoff, General Lazareff, founder of the famed Institute of Oriental Languages at Moscow, Prince Bebutoff, Prince Argoutinsky-Dolgoroukoff, General Ter Ghoukasoff, and, finally, Count Loris Melikoff, who attempted to give a constitution to Russia and who served as Alexander II's Chancellor.

The Armenians, however, have not only played an important role in Russian military and political history, but have also been prominent in the agricultural life of that country. Peter the Great and the Empress Catharine the Great, for instance, brought into Russia Armenian husbandmen from Persia in order to use their particular skills to the benefit of Russian agronomy. The breeding of silk-worms, and the mulberry and grape culture which flourishes especially at Astrakhan were introduced to Russia by Armenians. These industries, incidentally, are actually practiced today by refugee Armenians living in southern France.

In still other fields, the Armenians gave Russia one of its most eminent painters, Ayvazovsky, and a host of prominent half Armenians such as the well-known writer, Nemirovitch Dantchenko.

We should also mention here Rouben Mamoulian, the eminent Hollywood film director who is known all over the world, Michael Arlen, whose novels, written in English, have been translated into all European tongues, and the American author William Saroyan.

In the 13th century, the waves of Armenian emigration reached the borders of Poland, Hungary and Rumania proper. The bulk of these immigrants soon collected at Lvov where, even today, the Armenians preserve their identity though they have become Roman Catholics, have forgotten their maternal language and have changed their family names.

In Rumania, a great many cities—Galatz is an example—and many churches were constructed by the Armenians. There, the Armenians have played a considerable role in the political, literary and even scientific life of Rumania. They have given to that hospitable country two Ministers of Armenian antecedents—Professor Spiru Haret, who founded the Rumanian cooperatives, and Tranku Iassy, Rumania's first Minister of Cooperatives. According to Profes-

sor Katzarov, Samuel, king of Bulgaria, was an Armenian. The famous Monastery of Batchkovo, in southern Bulgaria, was founded by an Armenian monk who had emigrated from Tiflis.

Armenian immigrants are responsible for the introduction of carpet making into Greece, and have played a preponderantly major role in the establishment of the goldsmith and fig industries there.

Everywhere they have gone, in fact, the Armenians have offered their talents to their adopted countries. As further examples, Tchamtchian is professor of chemistry at the University of Bologna, Italy, Professor Orbeli teaches physiology at the University of Leningrad, and the architect Tamanoff, who has been working of late in Soviet Armenia, is an eminent professor at the same school.

A few words should also be said about the role played by the Armenians in Persia proper where there have been Armenian counsellors of the Shahs, ambassadors and state ministers. The exportation of cotton, rice and dried fruits was established by the Armenians of Persia.

It might also be mentioned *ad passim* that the fish industries of the Black and Caspian Seas were founded by Armenians, notably by Lianosoff and Mailoff, and that the exploitation of oil at Baku was organised by Armenians. In this connection, the names of Mantacheff and Ghoukasoff stand out prominently.

We have not by any means submitted a complete list of all Armenians who have made names for themselves in the cultural lives of their adopted countries. At Venice and Vienna, the Armenians founded a congregation of learned monks, the Mekhitarists, who have given to the world of learning not only a great number of researchists in both Armenian and world history, but who have also published innumerable translations of western classic works into the



Armenian.

It is plain that, ordinarily, all these accomplishments of Armenians would have been done in their fatherland. But today the greater part of the country of their

fathers is devastated by the Turks and is a part of Turkey, while Soviet Armenia is too poor and tiny to receive all the Armenian emigrants living in the dispersion, who number close to two million souls.

## THE ARMENIAN EMPERORS OF THE BYZANTINE EMPIRE

(A.D. 582-1028)

- 582- 602—Maurice
- 610- 641—Heraklios I Flavius
- 641- 668—Constans II, son of Heraklios
- 678- 685—Masissius the Usurper
- 685- 695—Justinian II, Rhinotmetos, son of Constantine IV
- 695- 698—Leontios the Usurper
- 698- 705—Tiberios III Apsimaris, the Usurper
- 705- 711—Tiberios IV, and his father Justinian II Rhinotmetos
- (End of the Heraklian Dynasty)
- 711- 713—Philippikos Bardanes
- 742 —Artavasd
- 813- 820—Leo V the Armenian
- 842- 867—Michael III
- 867- 886—Basil I
- 886- 912—Leo VI the Philosopher, son of Basil I
- 912- 913—Alexander
- 913- 919—Constantine VIII
- 920- 944—Romanos I Lekapenos
- 944- 963—Romanos II, son of Constantine III
- 963- 969—Nikephoros II Phokas
- 969- 976—John I Tsimiskes
- 976-1025—Basil II, son of Romanos II
- 1025-1028—Constantine IX

*(With Constantine came to an end the lawful or unlawful succession of 23 Armenian occupants of the Byzantine throne. Armenian empresses and generals, however, continued to play an important role in the affairs of the Empire.)*

## EVEN SO WITH MAN

By N. BEGLAR

*Upon the screen of my fancy, there rose the vastness of an ocean,  
And on that ocean a sturdy ship.  
And on the ship was I.*

*The ship set sail and I was bailed to instruct  
Whereto I wished the vessel to be steered.*

*I chose the very centre of that vastness,  
The heart of an ocean's boundlessness —  
A point from where each lapping league of sea  
Rolls on, lashed by rushing winds.*

*We got there.  
Dropped anchor.*

*By me I had a log.  
A heavy piece of wood  
Not three yards long.  
I signed and it was lifted—heaved high—then dropped into the ocean.*

*"Now Hazard! Have them say!"—I cried.  
"From the very centre of this sea,  
"From the heart of an immensity,  
"Take thou this log whither thou wilt—  
"And let no man speak to me of fate".*

*I smiled as I beheld a million waves.  
I smiled: for who upon that rolling sea  
Could point and pick and say:*

*"There runs the first, the first of the first tenscore waves,  
"The first to rear that log upon its crest,  
"And take it on a yard or two or ten".*

*And who would then stretch out a steady hand,  
And point and pick and say:*

*"There goes the second—the second of the second tenscore waves,  
"The second in the long, long relay, the wave to take your log  
"From where the first dropped off,  
"And speeding, as by destiny pursued,  
"Take it on a yard or two or ten".*

*Who in that lost stretch of sea,  
Would feel the tenscore winds that swell the sails,  
Would feel their bushed pressing,  
And turn to me, a glitter in his eye,  
An ear bent upon the brushing winds,  
And point and pick and say:*

*"I know the gust that raced past just now,  
"To be the one, chosen, sole and fated,  
"To speed your log along a traced path  
"Towards a point pre-established".*

*And who—with faculties not of this world—  
Would stand forth as a diety,  
And point and pick and say.*

*"There—even there!—under that rock, or mound, or bill  
"Is the point,  
"The one point,*

*"Upon the wave-washed shore,  
"The plot of sand  
"Which now I choose upon these endless shorelines which brace the seas,  
"And having chosen prophesy that upon that point,  
"And upon no other,  
"Will rest the fated log".*

*And as I stood on deck,  
Saw a million waves, felt a million winds,  
Thought of a million miles of never-ending shores,  
I felt deep relief come o'er me,  
For, thought I,  
Surely if Hazard is so much more powerful than Fate,  
The hazard of waves and winds so mighty as to challenge  
All prognostic, all possible forecast of a line a log thrown into a sea  
May take—*

All possibility of knowing on what bare and forlorn rock  
 In some remote land bordering this sea,  
 My log will ultimately rest,  
 If that is so, if fate is hereby so defeated by mere hazard and caprice  
 Of dancing wave and singing wind,  
 Then how much weaker,  
 How utterly impotent  
 This same fate against the might of man's will and set resolve,  
 Man's will which is purposely out to thwart this hateful Fate,  
 Man's will whose every bent is to counteract, oppose,  
 If need be smash and shatter what Fate may have in store.

I felt relief. I breathed. Then slowly smiled.

Yet my thoughts went on.

And slowly an icy drop rose upon my brow,  
 And followed then another and still another,  
 And my very soul, caught in ice, shuddered and shrank,  
 And in the vastness of that expanse of wave and wind,  
 Braced by a million-miled shore,  
 I screamed and pressed my forehead—  
 For beneath that forehead thought had not ceased to succeed thought,  
 And now a new net of a new weaving said:

"Be the path your log will follow as unpredictable as you will,  
 "Yet once it sets itself upon its way,  
 "That log will follow but one and one only path".

"Be the spot upon which it is to rest,  
 "One chosen upon a million-miled stretch of shore,  
 "Yet when that log rests, it is to rest,  
 "Upon one and one spot alone".

"Think of that:  
 "One, path alone to follow,  
 "One spot alone upon which to rest".

"Is that not fate?"

## EVEN SO WITH MAN

*"Even so with man:*

*"For whether he follow this path or that*

*"Because of will or sense or love,*

*"One fact will ever remain—*

*"That there is ONE path*

*"He will have followed.*

*"And should man strive for this or that or yet another end,*

*"There is but one place whereat he'll finally rest.*

*"And what man calls Will, is no more than that wave*

*"In that boundless ocean.*

*"What he terms Resolve, not a tithe more*

*"Than the passing wind that speeds the lingering wave and log.*

*"And wave and wind,*

*"Will and resolve,*

*"One takes the log*

*"The other the man,*

*"One to a spot on a shore,*

*"The other to a grave".*

*No longer could I scream.*

*The shudder of ice*

*Had frozen all sound*

*In a throat now crisped and dry.*

*And when the last thought latent came,*

*Even the ship shrank, the sails sagged, the waves bushed,*

*And the winds with wings of lead were dead on a sea of leaden red.*

*And in the silence of a vastness it slowly said:*

*"That log—a piece of wood—not three yards long.*

*"Guided by hazard, mere hazard and caprice*

*"Of dancing wave and singing wind,*

*"That log may wonder yet, as to the slice of shore*

*"Whereon it is to rest.*

*"For who knows?*

*"Albeit fated,*

*"Mayhap it rests on rock, or golden sand, or velvet grass*

*"Or maybe still*

*"It is to slide and drift in some remote lagoon of fairyland.*



"Yet man,  
"Almighty man,  
"Who will not bear of fate,  
"Still less of hazard and caprice,  
"Who mocks all things not of Resolve or Will,  
"By this same Will being ever guided,  
"Ever ends in the ever-gaping, ever-avid, all things-ending  
"Ever same, unchanging grave".

In the silence of a vastness  
I felt man, I lived man, I knew man.

I was alone.

Cairo, February 1948.



# A GENERAL SURVEY OF ARMENIAN ART

By STELLA S. RUSTIGIAN

## Introduction

The majority of art schools in America and in foreign countries conduct classes in the history of ornament, architecture and allied subjects. The ornament, decoration and architecture of many nations are studied and the contributions of each country to general art knowledge are noted. Various motifs in ornament are accredited to various nations, forms of decoration and mediums of execution are classified as the creations of certain races, and architectural novelties in the plan and construction of edifices are attributed to different sources.

The aim of this article is to acquaint the reader with Armenian Art in general, and with its contributions in particular, which cause it to merit recognition and inclusion in art histories.

It is not possible in the following pages to treat Armenian Art in its different and numerous manifestations. To attempt to do so in an exhaustive manner would demand a long research and thick volumes with figures to illustrate the text. In the following brief summary we will try to introduce the reader to this phase of Eastern art, and point out its possible influences upon the art of the West.

## Topography of Armenia

Armenia, "the cradle of the human race," is a land ancient among ancients, and fountain head of antiquity. Her rivers and valleys, her shrines, rocks and mountains, silent witnesses of prehistoric conflicts and changing fortunes, are replete with memo-

rials which echo her former glory. The ruins of churches, palaces and monasteries attest to a civilization which matched the culture of the Greek and the splendor of the Roman.

Armenia occupies her place in the series of Eastern nations which have always practiced the fine arts and produced works worthy of being brought to the attention of those who do not pass indifferently over art in its varied and multiple forms. Unfortunately, she was not allowed to carry her architectural inventions to full accomplishments. Neither the leisure which only peace can give, nor the wealth which is another concomitant of major art productions were at her command. Ernest Short in his "House of God" writes:

"A warrior like Tigranes the Great was not only able to make Armenia the seat of a self-supporting monarchy, but engaged in a policy of expansion, attacking Persia, and subduing Syria and Palestine. Armenia, however, was a chaos of tableland and mountain, and had no fruitful plain or important trade route to assure her of continued wealth. When the strong hand of Tigranes was removed, Armenia became the battleground of contesting civilizations and creeds, Byzantium on the west and Islam on the east, and the development of religious art in Armenia suffered accordingly."

We can readily see how the geographical position of this country has played a large part in its history and art. Surrounded by hostile nations, and constantly warring with them, her art progress was retarded and her natural growth hindered.

**S. HRIPSIMEH****ETCHMIADZIN**

*Etchmiadzin constructed entirely of wood by St. Gregory  
at beginning of IV Century. Replaced by edifice of stone  
in 618 A.D. by Catholicos Komitas.*

Armenia is a huge plateau, averaging 6000 feet in height, a westward extension of the great Iranian highland. It is bounded by the Caucasus Mountains in the North, the Taurus Mountains and Kurdistan on the south, and the Persian lowlands on the southeast. As it ends abruptly at the Black Sea on one side, so on the other, the south, it breaks down in rugged terraces to the Mesopotamian lowlands; on the east it sinks gradually to the lower levels of Persia, and on the west to the plains of Asia Minor. The chief mountain ranges run from northeast to southwest, rising above the general level of the plateau to an altitude ranging from 8000 to 12,000 feet, and culminating in Ararat, the lofty summit of which stands 17,000 feet above sea level. Broad, elevated and fertile valleys range themselves between the mountains, the main lines of which are determined by the four chief rivers of the country, the Tigris, the Euphrates, the Arax and the Kur. All four rise in the plateau, the two former emptying into the Persian Gulf, and the latter two into the Caspian Sea. Although the valleys are generally broad expanses of arable land, grass covered and treeless, the gorges of the Euphrates and Tigris can not be surpassed in grandeur and wildness.

Dr. Louis A. Boettiger in "Armenian Legends and Festivals" states:

"The singularity of the physical environment has placed its irremovable stamp upon the people. The words that best describe the country are not trees, hills, forests, gently flowing streams, such words as commonly express American landscape, but rather, gorges, mountain-ranges, broad river valleys, treeless expanses of country. There is space to make one think of other worlds and other shores, and there are mountains suggestive of strength that rise majestically above the plateau, to fill one with awe and wonder. Religious the people are naturally, but more than that they are thoughtful, re-

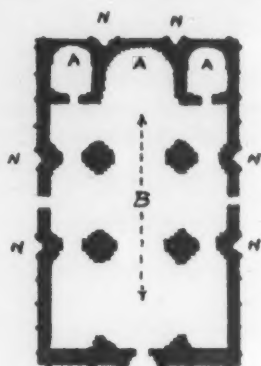
flecting, considering. No writer that I have read but has spoken of the Armenian as intellectually alert and capable. That this thoughtfulness, this robust element in their idealism is in part the stamp of physical nature, there can be little doubt."

Small wonder then that this religious feeling found expression in architecture in the form of temples, shrines and other edifices for worship, both pagan and later, Christian.

At the beginning of the fourth century, the preaching of Gregory the Illuminator caused King Tiridates to make Christianity the state religion. Divided soon after between the Romans and Persians, Armenia became the field of unceasing struggles between the two peoples, but she did not lose the feeling of her former self-government and formed a separate nationality. Even as applied to religion, she became isolated from the Greek Church in remaining attached in a certain measure to the monophysite doctrines.

At the time of the crusades, the realm of Armenia was situated more to the south and contained Cilicia. Placed thus at the extreme frontier of the Christian world, disputed over by conflicting civilizations, this country submitted to the most varied influences. However the people who inhabited that region were Christian, and, when they wished to construct sacred buildings it was in the direction of the Greek Empire that they turned their faces.

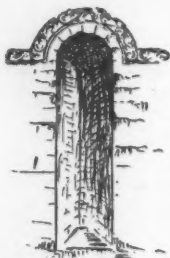
"Whereas in the west," writes Mr. Short, "the development of a distinctive Christian architecture was crippled by the tradition of the timber-roofed and long-naved basilica, in Eastern Christendom, vault architecture was quickly adapted for Christian worship, and the barrel vault, as well as the dome was exploited as an element in Christian architecture. It is even suggested that the barrel-vaulting of Armenia was a potent example when the Romanesque builders of



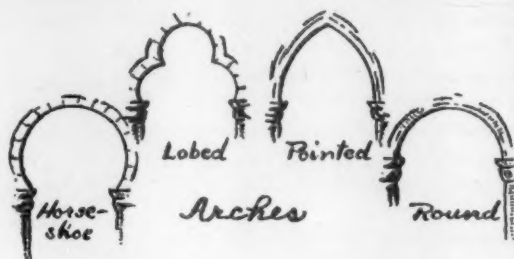
Ani Cathedral-Plan  
1010 A.D.

Key: N = External Niches  
A = Apse  
B = Body or Nave

"Almost Square" Rectangle-  
type with Triapsidal ending,



Hooded Niche.



Rotunda-type Church of Ani

St. Gregory Apughamravots - X Century.

Twelve-sided polygonal plan.  
Six sides have external niches.  
Dome on high drum with conical  
roof.



Italy devised the vaulted church which developed into the Gothic House of God."

The art which grew up against such a background has not yet been thoroughly understood. Many have confused it with that of Syria, Byzantium and Cappadocia. That these countries influenced the art of Armenia, and that they were in turn influenced by it is beyond question. But just what precise form this influence took has not been determined. Research in this field has been attempted by relatively few individuals. In fact, French and English travellers of the 19th century were the first to call attention to the monuments of Armenia. "Les Ruines d'Ani" by the well-known Orientalist, Brosset, appeared in 1860. This is the first work devoted exclusively to Armenian architecture. Auguste Choisy attempted a critical study of Armenian churches in his "Histoire de l'Architecture", published in 1899, noting certain forms which seemed to him specifically Armenian, although on the whole he considered Armenian architecture an offshoot of Byzantine art.

The excavations of Father Khatchik Tattian at Zvartnots, and those of Professor Marr and the architect Thoramanean at Ani in the last years of the nineteenth and in the beginning of the twentieth century were followed by the first detailed studies of specific Armenian monuments.

"But in the light of recent investigations by the Austrian, Strzygowski, Persia, with Armenia contributing, seems the likeliest creative source of both the Byzantine and the Moslem architectural impulse," says Sheldon Cheney in his "World History of Art."

### Architecture

The ethnological value of Armenian architecture is its great title to interest. It is claimed to be the direct descendant of the Sassanian style, and the immediate parent of the Russian. At the same time, standing on the eastern confines of the Byzantine em-

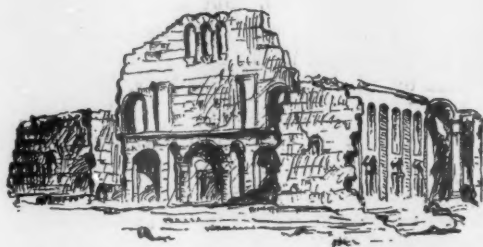
pire, it received thence that impress of Christian art which distinguished it from the form, and which it transmitted to the latter. It thus forms one of those important links in the chain of architectural history, which when apprehended adds to the philosophical interest of an otherwise dark and perplexed subject.

Because Armenia was deforested early in its history, builders were forced to use concrete made from river mud mixed with lime. The masonry was so finely joined that after one thousand years or more, and after five hundred years of abandonment, the stone can hardly be detached from the concrete. The Armenians, as contrasted with the Greeks and the Romans, built for use rather than for luxury. Walls were thick for protection and churches were built with durability in the future in mind, to keep out the barbarous Tartars and other such tribes. Hence such strength and endurance was given to buildings that they still stand after centuries of devastation and pillage.

Construction was functional. The dome rested not on the walls, but on four columns joined by arches. The Armenians were the first to introduce the practice of setting church domes on high bases, with the result that what the cupola, (or spherical cup-shaped roof) lost in diameter, it gained in pre-eminence over the subordinate parts of the building. The Byzantines adopted this feature at a later date and in a modified form at the beginning of the 11th century. Other features of Armenian design were triapsidal endings and the use of blank arcading with slender shafts for the decoration of the lower walls and the drum beneath the dome. This feature influenced architecture in the west and in Italy, as well as in the east. Domes had conical roofs, entirely constructed of masonry, the stones being dressed by ax. The open lantern or spirelet to hold bells is an Armenian invention. Hooded niches in the walls, round



Spirelet or lantern.  
Bell tower with conical  
cupols or dome.



Early basilica-type church at Ezeruk  
V-VI Century.



BAS RELIEF LION ANI

arches used by the side of pointed ones, horseshoe arches (fifth century), and lobed arches (1250-51) representing the Trinity were also used.

The Armenians showed remarkable originality in planning round and cruciform designs, in roofing their concrete vaults, and ornamenting their churches. They removed the old basilican thin walls and flat roofs whose weight was borne by unsafe and combustible beams. In form, the Armenian church seems to have been influenced by the domed church of Zoroaster, the founder of the faith enshrined in the Zend Avesta. A surviving example of the one-domed church which was based upon the characteristic Persian tomb is the Baptistry at Nisibis in Mesopotamia, which was built in 359 A. D. The single domed tomb was enlarged so that it became a hall of assembly, an apse and a barrel vaulted nave being added on one side. The 10th century saw some fine churches at Ani and Vaspurakan built by King Gagik with the aid of his court architects, Manuel and Tiridates who based their designs upon a domed building arising from a square plan in the Persian manner.

The Cathedral of Ani was commenced about 989 and was completed by Tiridates in 1010 A. D. It is a building 100 feet long and 65 feet wide. The dome is supported by pieces of clustered columns and slightly pointed arches. It is important to note the date of the Cathedral at Ani, especially as the Gothic features can be traced in Armenian architecture even as early as this. Apart from the dome, other arches in the Cathedral at Ani are rounded. Among the notable buildings at Ani are the Church of St. Gregory, also built by King Gagik, the Church of the Holy Redeemer (12th century), and the Church on the Citadel with its circular tower crowned with a dome. Usually the dome rested on a lofty drum and covered the crossing, the rest of the church being covered with barrel vaults.

There are several periods of Armenian architecture. From the 4th to the 7th century, buildings reflect Roman influence. The basilica or rectangular type church is represented by the monuments at Tikor (Degor) and of Ererouq or Kizil-Koule. The plans of these churches are related to Roman and Romano-Byzantine sources but do not have the narthex or vestibule in front of the church.

At the end of the 6th century and the beginning of the 7th, all Roman influence has disappeared, and we find Syrian and Sassanide influence. The church at Mrene is an example.

Architecturally, the Golden Age of Armenia was from the 6th to the 13th century. Churches and monasteries built during this period may be studied in Mr. H. F. B. Lynch's "Travels in Armenia", and in the sketches of Mr. Arshag Fetvadjian who spent twenty years in making detailed drawings of Armenian churches and monasteries and their decoration. The art of Armenia has also solicited the vast curiosity of Josef Strzygowski, and one knows the importance this Austrian authority has attributed to it.

This was an epoch of rivalry between architects to create artistic novelties. Western architects who attempted to adapt the Roman basilica to Christian usage had found it difficult to give a sense of spaciousness and secure unity of design. This was partly due to the narrowness of the nave, or the body of the Western church, and partly to the importance of the apse or terminal recess in early ritual, which made it difficult to exploit the device of a spacious dome over the crossing. In Armenian design the space under the dome was utilized as a means for awakening a sense of solemnity and awe which accompanies the religious mood. Nevertheless it must not be thought that the builder in Armenia had freedom to develop his art, guided by architectural considerations alone. On the con-

trary, his use of material and design was continually controlled by authority. The Armenian Church Law was drafted well before the 8th century. Canon 182 reads:

"Only the bishop orthodox in faith may design the plan of a church, or the Chorepiscopos or the Peredert with the bishop's consent. If any presume to plan a church without the bishop or Chorepiscopos we ordain the destruction of the plans. Should, however, an unauthorized plan be sanctioned, we recommend that it be again submitted for approval. Thus shall the designing of the church be blameless."

The rotunda type of church was developed which reposed on a circular or polygonal base. This form is very rare and nearly unknown in most parts of the great Byzantine architectural province. Classical representations of this type are the church of St. Gregory at Ani and the church of Zvartnots near Etchmiadzin.

A third type, most frequent, is that of the "square" or "almost square" rectangle, usually flanked by semi-circular apses. Representatives of this type are the Cathedral of Etchmiadzin, Chapel of Ripsime, near Etchmiadzin, and the Cathedral of Ani. Etchmiadzin, built by St. Gregory at the beginning of the 4th century, was constructed entirely of wood. In 618 A. D. the Catholicos Komitas had it replaced by an edifice of stone.

The oldest Armenian church in existence is the one in the village of Tikor near Ani, ancient capital of Armenia. Horseshoe arches over the western and lateral naves are worth remarking as it is a feature which Saracenic architects used so currently and employed for almost every class of opening such that it is commonly thought to be original with them. At Tikor the horseshoe arch is used only as an ornamental feature. Six buttresses with their offsets adorn the facade. They anticipate by several centuries the appearance of this form in western Europe.

If Charles Texier in the 19th century had not seen the chapel at Tikor the world would have accepted as a truth that the horseshoe arch was an Arabian invention. Since this building is rapidly falling into decay, not only would have been lost the means of knowing that the horseshoe arch existed as early as the 5th century (480-510 A. D.), but proofs and examples of Armenian forms, construction and stone sculpture would be buried under its ruins.

Even though Artashat, Vagharshapat, Armavir and Dvin (Tovin) and other ancient capitals have long since vanished, luckily there still remains Ani as a splendid memorial of architectural accomplishment. Ani has been called the "storage vault" of ancient Armenian art, and the "key" with which to solve the mysteries of lost knowledge and history of earlier civilizations, since the people of its time did not discard the designs of their ancestors, but added to them their own inventions without destroying the essence of the former styles.

Ani was the capital of Armenia during the period of greatest unity and elevation. The cathedral at Ani has been called more perfect in outline than any building of the Byzantine style. If, however, the cathedral at Ani is interesting to the architect from its style, it is still more so to the archaeologist from its date, since there seems no reason to doubt that it was built in the year 1010 as recorded in an inscription of its walls. With this date in mind, it is startling to find a church not only with pointed arches but with coupled piers and all the characteristics of a complete pointed arch style such as might be found in Italy or Sicily not earlier than the 13th century. This peculiarity, however, is confined to the constructive parts of the building interior.

#### Decoration of Buildings

It has been said by certain authorities that with scarcely an exception, all the

buildings in the Armenian provinces are so small that they would hardly deserve a place in a history of architecture were it not for the ingenuity of their plans and elegance of their details. Taken altogether, Armenian architecture is far more remarkable for elegance than for grandeur. Internally, the churches were always painted, and externally adorned with reed-like columns. Their windows and openings were often ornamented with minute and elaborate carvings more like jewelers work than anything designed to be executed in stone.

The purely architectural mouldings of the 12th century are very simple; a cornice or a simple cove, sometimes decorated with painted or carved palmettes or foilage; a rude ball shaped capital: a torus moulding woven into patterns and often carved out so as to join the windows and decorative panels in one scheme of ornament covering the whole facade.

Statuary and figures in relief appear to have been systematically avoided, and when used were crude and provincial. In some churches the king, bishop, or architect is represented holding the model of the building, or Christ is blessing. But the animal and decorative sculpture is much more artistic. The fighting animals are a reminiscence of Persian art; the peacocks, doves, griffins and dragons, heraldically arrayed or intertwined with vines are derived from Byzantine models.

The most successful use of decorative sculpture is in the broad bands surrounding the church windows and in the plaques let into the walls. This practice is distinctively different from the Byzantine, because the latter built their churches of brick, which does not lend itself to carved decoration as does the stone construction of the Armenians. These decorated bands are very flat and in low relief, and are often highly original, differing from Byzantine work and bearing a most remarkable resemblance to the patterns in Celtic-Irish, Anglo-Saxon, and

Frankish illuminated manuscripts. A certain basket pattern, for instance, appearing in a capital from Gelathia, Armenia, finds its way into Irish manuscripts. It is also worthy of notice that a form of Armenian intertwinings appears in Hittite engravings.

Zvartnots shows us in the middle of the 7th century (641 A. D.) Ionic capitals, and with the corbels and volutes decorated with intertwinings. On other capitals we see eagles of a Roman style beside characters made of combinations of triangles. The motif commonly called the "Moorish star pattern" illustrates this type and appears in Armenia in the year 1216. Other motifs used were the rosette, strapwork, rinceau, palmette, geometric designs, bird forms (principally eagles, peacocks and doves), lions, bulls and goats; guilloche, star forms and plant forms.

Combinations of plant and human forms were made. A certain piece of sculpture shows a goddess rising from a bed of acanthus leaves. In her upraised hands she is supporting a block decorated with rosettes.

The most decorative class of smaller works are the sepulchral slabs (*katch-kar*) usually erected like antique stiles on pedestals in the open air. Their design is graceful in outline and delicate in the detail of their arabesques and lacework pattern around a central cross or rosette. One cannot help seeing in such as these the originals of the famous Irish, Welsh and Saxon stone crosses which are far less exquisite in design and execution.

The mysterious round towers which form so characteristic a feature of Irish architecture must have had their origin further east than Rome, among some people using groups of churches and small cells, instead of congregational basilicas. As far as we can see, it is to Armenia that we must look for the original design of this feature. This may seem idle speculation, and it may turn out that the similarities are accidental, al-





though at present there is no other explanation for them.

The art of Armenia deserves more than a general survey and a passing interest. Here can be found the originals of architectural inventions, forms and motifs, which have hitherto been incorrectly ascribed to other sources. Henri Coulon, in an article, "L'art et l'Arménie", in the magazine "La Voix de l'Arménie" claims that:

"If one will visit the ruins of Ani, one will see that according to the dates, Roman architecture found its origin in Armenia."

K. J. Basmadjian in his "Modern History of the Armenians" recalls exactly the application of Roman art in the Occident. He writes:

"It is perhaps useful to recall that the dome of the cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle in Germany, that of the church of Germigny de Pres near Orleans in France, are of the Armenian style and that this same style is not at all Romano-Byzantine, as we thought up to now, but comes from the East, from Armenia."

Arthur Upham Pope, Director of the Iranian Institute, has written in the Armenian Quarterly an article entitled, "Iranian and Armenian Contributions to the Beginnings of Gothic Architecture". Here he lists the indispensable elements of Gothic Architecture, and proceeds to show proofs of the earlier existence of the ogival vault, compound piers and verticality in Armenia. He believes that the interior of the Cathedral of Ani is so completely in the Gothic manner and mood that the relation between Ani and the French Gothic lacks but little of proof.

It is in this article that Mr. Pope announces: "Professor Monneret de Villard has found an important record of an Armenian prelate and an entourage of some 60 persons who came to northern Italy in the eleventh century, and this prelate was responsible for the construction of a small vaulted church north of Milan. The publica-

tion of this most significant discovery is eagerly awaited."

Our knowledge of Armenian architecture is still incomplete, and it may be that some of our conclusions will have to be revised when a more thorough study of the remaining specimens can be resumed, and proper excavations can be made throughout the Middle East. However this relatively new study reveals at the outset that Armenian architecture is worthy of more than a cursory examination, and when finally understood may supply the answer to many disputed questions of history.

### Murals and Mosaics

Though there are but scant remains of the monumental painting of Armenia, still we gather from literary sources that wall painting was very general especially by the tenth century. We have evidence that while the exteriors of churches were richly ornamented, the interiors were not always neglected but were painted, and mosaics were occasionally used. The ruins of Zvartnots reveals two mosaic fragments, and at Dvin and Jerusalem fragments of ancient pavement mosaics have come to light. They show floral designs, the head of a feminine figure, probably that of the Virgin, and they bear inscriptions in Armenian. Mosaics appear in one instance at Gelathi, and here it was a present to King David from Emperor Alexis Comnenus.

Considerable independence of Byzantium is shown in these wall decorations. Caucasian painting was far less stiff and classic than the Byzantine. Favorite subjects were historic scenes in which events of national interest were glorified and portraits of Armenian sovereigns were shown. Such frescoes are at Sion (11th Century), Nekresi (11th century), and especially at Gelathi and Bethania.

Thomas Ardzruni mentions paintings in the chapel built by King Gagik at Ostan and in the church of Aghtamar. The subjects of



the Aghtamar decorations are religious, and we see there depicted the Wedding at Cana, the Entry of Christ into Jerusalem, Christ before Pilate, the Crucifixion and the Ascension. These date probably from the tenth century.

The historian Orbelian indicates that the churches of Siunik were lavishly decorated with paintings, however it is to illuminated manuscripts that we must turn for an adequate opinion of Armenian painting, since there are far more examples of these smaller works in existence today, than there are of monumental painting.

### **Illumination of Manuscripts**

The frontispieces with which the Armenian artists ornamented the beginning of their books, or the principal divisions of any works, offers as much perfection in the delicacy of the drawing as in the richness of their color.

I had the pleasure of examining several ancient manuscripts in the library of the Hartford Theological Seminary at Hartford, Connecticut. A verbal description can scarcely do justice to these beautiful works of the 17th century. One book was bound in dark leather. Marks on the cover showed where precious stones had once been used to ornament the book. It had a finely wrought silver clasp and silver mountings at the four corners. The book was a copy of the Gospels painstakingly written by hand. The index pages, and pages that marked the main divisions were lavishly ornamented with compositions of plant and animal forms. The usual construction of the compositions are three vertical bands of designs resting on a horizontal band, and supporting a block of designs bisymmetrically arranged which occupies the upper half of the page. In the two vertical spaces formed by the uprights, the written matter is included. All other pages are ornamented with marginal sketches of conventionalized motifs, some in color, and some in line alone. Colors used were

red, orange, yellow, some greens, blue, violet and gold. The gold leaf was usually laid on first, the other colors being applied later, leaving the gold as a background.

Although religious manuscripts are in the majority, secular works are also found. There are several manuscripts in existence telling the story of Alexander the Great in a series of illustrations. One manuscript of this type was written at about 1696-1697. The paintings are very decorative and not pure representation. Their design and composition are pleasing to the eye, and remind one of the old Persian manuscripts.

The Armenian manuscripts which one can consult in public and private libraries of Europe and America attest to the great development and perfection of the miniaturists and calligraphers of this small race. That is to say that there has been certainly in the course of centuries well known schools where apprentice illuminators have been taught. A complete work on these schools has not yet been attempted, perhaps because the time has not yet arrived to do so. A more abundant publication of precious information which the surviving memorials of manuscripts can furnish is necessary in order to attempt such an enterprise. This cannot happen until an acquaintance can be made through fine catalogs with the treasures which are found in the libraries of the patriarchal monastery of St. Jacques in Jerusalem and in the monastery of the Mekhitarist fathers on the island of St. Lazare at Venice.

One of the most satisfactory studies of the stylistic differences and artistic trends of the Armenian illuminated manuscripts is that done by Sirarpie Der Nersessian in her "Armenia and the Byzantine Empire". She finds from the words of Vrtanes Kertogh, prominent in Armenian church history and the author of a treatise against the Iconoclasts, that by his time (end of seventh century) Armenians were beginning to paint.

It is known definitely that two centuries later, toward the end of the 800's there were skilled painters and scribes among the monks of the monastery of Tatev. Manuscripts of the ninth and tenth centuries show a marked Byzantine influence, although the Armenian had a greater tendency toward decorative design rather than plastic form, thus distinguishing it from the former. Later we find a swing to the Syrian and Coptic style. The draughtsmanship in manuscripts in this latter vein is very weak, although the coloring and decorative effect is very striking. As in all the arts of Armenia, we find eastern and western influence in manuscript illumination simultaneously. However by the 11th century, with the major part of the country under Byzantine domination, it follows that western artistic influence should be the stronger.

With the establishing of a new Armenian kingdom in Cilicia, we encounter a new, refined, elegant style in art. During the period from the 11th to the 15th century Byzantine influence predominated. The 13th century marks for this as well as for most other branches of art the highest point of perfection. The Araratian region, Erzerum and Erzindjan seem to have been the important centers of Armenian calligraphers and miniaturists of this period. The great period of Armenian illumination ends with Toros of Taron in Greater Armenia, and Sargis Pidzak in Cilicia, although the copying and illustration of manuscripts went on as late as the 17th century, after Armenian books were being printed. Van, Melitene, Ispahan and Constantinople were the later centers, and the foreign influence of Italy and Persia was being felt.

The miniatures and illuminations which exist today retain their brilliance to a remarkable degree, and although the parchment, sheepskin or paper upon which a design is painted has become yellow and brittle with age, the painting is still as fresh as it

was when first applied. Perhaps the reason for this extraordinary characteristic is the composition of the paints themselves.

In the "Handes Amsorya", a review publication by the Mekhitarist fathers at Vienna, Austria, was given in 1895 (pp. 87, 316, and 370-371) a few texts relating to the "Composition of Colors According to the Ancients". From ancient manuscripts dating from the 17th or 18th centuries have been collected formulas which describe in detail the processes for obtaining the paints, each color having its individual process and ingredients. The following is a partial translation of the most typical passages:

"Take verdigris, powder of copper, and bean meal. Mix them well together. Expose to the sun for twenty days. This will produce a pretty green."

"Grind orpiment, wash it well with water in which ash of walnut has been steeped; also wash ginger with sweet water. Add gum arabic and draw or paint. Grind orpiment (oski zarikn) very fine. Add to it yellow incense and draw or paint. Add to vermillion the yellow of an egg; add to it gum arabic and draw or paint. Take saffron, wet it, pass through a cloth, take the water, put it over the fire so that it will thicken. Add to it gum arabic and draw or paint. Mix the flakes of orpiment with ginger and you will obtain orange color. Grind the orpiment to bits, you will obtain orange."

Many of these processes are very lengthy and complicated, taking weeks to obtain a single color. Words of warning are also included as:

"With sepia do not use gum arabic. With verdigris, do not use water. If you use verdigris, be it to crush, or be it to draw with, always use vinegar."

Gold leaf or gold paint features very frequently in Armenian illuminations. The formula for powdering gold is:

"Take gold leaf in the desired quantity. Take also good liquid honey, or white lip-glue or gum arabic, melted and thick. Pour



the whole into a china receptacle that is large enough. Place the gold leaf on the surface; crush it with your finger, so as to mix it with the honey like dust. Then add water and wash away the honey. Let the gold deposit on the bottom; let clarify; wash again; let dry and draw (or paint) afterward with gum arabic."

### Carving

Wood carving and ivory carvings were practiced, as is shown by some church doors and a multitude of images, book covers, crosiers, crosses and other bits of handiwork.

If one were to judge by the "objects d'art" which one encounters in the middle ages in Armenia, one can assume and admit that the arts of jewelry and carving were then very much in favor. Ancient examples of these arts are shown in the old bindings of chased silver covering the Gospels, prayer books and other precious manuscripts. In this same period are objects carved in ivory, such as hilts of daggers and swords, and antique furniture, armchairs and tables covered with sculpture of a finish very remarkable for the time.

### Jewelry

In the high Middle Ages and the centuries which followed, these two arts, carving and jewelry, and especially jewelry, took a great step forward with the Armenians and attained with them such a perfection that the best carvers and the most skillful gold and silversmiths in the employ of the sultans of Turkey and the shahs of Persia were Armenians. Those from Van were justly reputed to be the most skillful in handling enameled silver and in producing those delicate filigree objects which are still admired and unsurpassed. In the whole of Asiatic and European Turkey, 90% of the silversmiths were Armenian. It was they who made the jewelry of the sultans. The famous jewels of Abd-ul-Hamid put on sale

in Paris after the revolution of 1909, that is to say after the dethronement of this sultan, were almost entirely made by Armenians.

After Strzygowski (*Amida* p. 352) cited by Dalton (*Byzantine Art and Archaeology*, p. 496) Armenia is the possible place of cloisonnee enamel. Dalton thinks that Syria, Mesopotamia and the countries between this last and the Caucasus are the countries of origin of cloisonnee enamel.

This, the highest effort of Armenian decoration with its amalgamation of Sassanian-Persian, of Byzantine and Moslem design, is shown in the goldsmith's work where the metals are combined with enamels and set stones. It is another link both with Byzantine and with the primitive jewelry of the Goths and their imitators, the Germanic tribes.

In jewelry, figured compositions were not avoided as in large sculpture especially where the art came strongly under Byzantine influence. However, the crude realism and exaggerated movement again reminds one of Carolingian and other branches of the north European art of mediaeval times rather than with Byzantium.

In the treasuries of monasteries and churches, especially in Etchmiadzin, may be found fine examples of these works. They date not earlier than the 10th century. Usually the ornamentation surrounds some sacred image. The elaborate geometric design, so difficult to follow, yet so thoroughly scientific, winds over the entire gold surface enclosing the enamels surrounded by pearls, the precious stones framed in golden "cloisons". Various forms of jewelry, reliques, gold images, triptyches, crosses, chalices, book covers are found in the church treasuries.

This Armenian art deviated from its prime object which was religious, and under Turkish domination has been applied to all sorts of objects; cups, saucers, mugs, and above all, jewelry for men and women, ear-

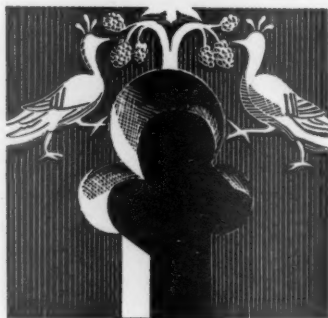
rings, necklaces, bracelets, rings, cigarette cases, tobacco cases, carved canes, and the like.

Several cities of Armenia have acquired in the course of ages reputations for the ability of their artisans. These cities were Van, Erzeroum, Arabkir, Caesaria and Sivas.

Carving was not confined only to ivory, wood and metal, but was also executed on

precious stones. A colony of artisans from Van have established this profession in Paris, and have developed the art which their ancestors used to practice in the venerable capital of Vaspurakan.

The artists and artisans of Armenia have attained a degree of perfection which permits them to support comparison with their contemporaries of the Orient, as well as with those of the Occident.



# HOW ARMENIA WAS SOVIETIZED

(Part IV)

By SIMON VRATZIAN

The war ended in the defeat of the Armenians, and it could not be otherwise. Armenia had been deserted by all, the Allies gave no aid, Georgia, which was friendly to Kemalist Turkey, remained neutral, Azerbaijan was an outright enemy, and so was Soviet Russia which helped the Turk in every way against Armenia.

"I have studied step by step, and day by day," writes Alexander Khatissian, "all the facts and the effects of foreign policy, and have come to the firm conviction that the Allies deserted Armenia and the Turks greatly benefited from this circumstance; but the Turks' best military allies were the Bolsheviks who aided them in every way to attack Armenia. This fact is indisputable. It is also a fact that, after helping each other, they partitioned Armenia between them."<sup>\*</sup>

Under the circumstances, little Armenia, now wholly exhausted, was compelled to accept the victor's terms. On November 23, the government sent to Alexandropol a delegation headed by Alexander Khatissian to sign a treaty of peace with the Turks. Before departing, relates Khatissian, "we begged the representatives of Soviet Russia (Legran and B. Mdivani who a few days before had arrived in Yerevan) to exert their influence upon the Turks in our behalf. We acquainted Legran and Mdivani

with our wishes and in return listened to their promises of help." Mdivani, a plenipotentiary from Moscow, was to proceed to Alexandropol to take part in the negotiations as mediator between the Armenians and the Turks. He had been sent to Armenia at the request of the Armenian government.

How far the representatives of Soviet Russia helped Armenia is seen by the story of Khatissian. The Turks rejected any intervention by Soviet Russia and refused the mediation of Mdivani. Upon Khatissian's appeal, Mdivani promised to help from outside, but, says Khatissian, "I am forced to state categorically that he was more of a hindrance to us than help. He hindered our work by going about in Alexandropol, as well as in Kars, organizing meetings, making speeches against us, blaming our delegation and the government of Armenia, preaching the Bolshevik ideology, and thus giving the Turks to understand he was really against us and not with us. I can prove that, in Alexandropol, the Soviet representative did not extend a single help to the Armenian delegation."<sup>\*</sup>

In Yerevan, Legran's conduct was no different. Right here, I can speak as an eye witness and a participant of the events, because beginning with November 24 I directed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of

<sup>\*</sup> The Origin and Development of the Armenian Republic, p. 255.

<sup>\*</sup> Ibid, pp. 262-3.

Armenia. Immediately after taking up my duties, I entered into communication with Legran. It was the government's aim to cultivate close friendship with Soviet Russia and assure her support. In those days it was plain to all that Armenia either must be with Russia, or become a plaything in the hands of the Turks and be destroyed forever. I put the question clearly and decisively.—“Can Russia help us? And if yes, how, and with what?” Legran's answer was equally plain and final. His proposition was to recall Khatissian's delegation, to reject the Turkish demands, and to let Soviet troops enter Armenia.

To my question, what guarantees there were that until the arrival of Soviet troops the Turks would not move on Yerevan and stage fresh massacres there, Legran replied that the Turks would not do anything of the sort. I pointed out to him that it would take at least a week before any tangible military aid arrived in Yerevan, whereas the Turkish army was poised on the banks of the Arax River, not far from the Markara Bridge, scarcely 20 to 25 miles from Armenia's capital. Should the government sever the negotiations, it would be tantamount to a resumption of the hostilities, in which case nothing could prevent the Turks from occupying the remainder of Armenia. You say we have the Soviet government's word? What guarantee is there that the Turks will pay any heed to that word?

Under the conditions of those days such questions carried great weight, but we know today that the Bolsheviks attached far too much importance to the Turks than the latter attached to them. There is no doubt that the Bolsheviks would never have become involved in a war with the Turks on account of the Armenians if the Turks, heedless of Legran's word, had attacked Armenia.

Again, it was apparent from Legran's words that he was far more interested in the sovietization of Armenia rather than the safety of the Armenian people, but he could not come right out with it because he saw clearly that the overwhelming majority of the Armenian people did not share such a sentiment. Whereas, with the entry of the Red Army, the sovietization of Armenia would be an accomplished fact.

The government repeatedly insisted on the importance of Russia's swift diplomatic intervention. “If you are sure the Turks will not take any step which is contrary to the Soviet government,” I tried to persuade Legran, “then your word should be enough to prevent the Turks from imposing harsh demands on Armenia. But if you think they will not heed your word, it then means that the presence of a few hundred Russian troops in Armenia will not stop the Turks from finally settling their score with the Armenians, especially in view of the fact that the Turks' chief grievance against us is that we are being made the tools of the Russians. It would be entirely different if the Russians had a large force poised near Armenia, ready to interpose at the needed moment, but such a force at present does not exist.”

Against the entry of Soviet troops, which in essence meant the sovietization of Armenia, I offered other arguments. I pointed out to him that, in the event of sovietization, Armenia would be completely cut off from Europe and America, and, as a result, she would be deprived of necessary supplies. That would mean certain starvation for the Armenian people because Russia herself at the time was starving and, therefore, was in no position to extend aid to Armenia. Secondly, sovietization would deal a mortal blow to all international commitments and treaties. Whereas, did Armenia remain independent, she could both avoid isolation,

and retain her position of judicial claimant of the Armenian question. If Armenia's friendship was imperative to Soviet Russia, we could guarantee that friendship. If Armenia's roads were imperative to Russia, we would guarantee them these roads.

Legran's reply was: "The Armenians must give up Europe and America once and forever and must draw a line across the Sevres Treaty. The Armenians must tie their fate to world revolution and to workers' and peasants' Russia. It is ridiculous to speak about flour which American spokesmen and missionaries are hurling into the face of the Armenians as charity; it's nothing for Russia to hasten several hundred thousand tons of flour from Kuban to Armenia." Legran objected to the concentration of Russian troops on Armenia's border as a sure cause of discontent or unpleasant talk on the part of the Turks. By occupying Armenia with Russian troops as far as Alexandropol, he argued, the Turks must be placed before an accomplished fact.

\* \* \*

Nothing came of the negotiations. The government was afraid that, did the Russians enter Armenia from the north, the Turks would advance from the south and occupy Yerevan long before the arrival of the Russians. Consequently, the government was loath to sever the Alexandropol negotiations until they had reached their logical conclusion. But that, too, was not an easy matter; the Turks were unyielding and always spoke in terms of ultimatums.

While the negotiations with Legran were still in process, the latter, on November 29, served the government the following statement in the nature of an ultimatum:

"The Central Committee of the Communist Party of Russia has decided to introduce the soviet order into Armenia. The Revolutionary Committee of Armenia already has set foot on Armenian soil. To de-

lay further is fraught with serious consequences. I want to know what your attitude is."

The next morning the demand for the sovietization of Armenia was presented in writing. And indeed, as we learned later, on November 29, a few Armenian Bolsheviks from Baku had entered the Village of Itchevan, on the border of Azerbaijan, and had issued a proclamation of Armenia's sovietization.

Thus both, the Turks on the one hand, and the Armenian and Russian Bolsheviks on the other, were speaking with ultimatums. Armenia was caught between two fires. There was nothing left for the government but to come to an understanding with the Soviet representative. On November 30, the negotiations began between the government's representatives, Dro, and H. Terterian, and Legran. In two days the two sides arrived at the agreement, and on December 2 the following pact was signed:

*Agreement Between the Representative  
of the Russian Soviet Federative  
Socialist Republic and the  
Government of Armenia*

December 2, 1920. Comrade Legran, Plenipotentiary representative of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, authorized by the Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party, on behalf of the Government of Soviet Russia for the Party of the First Part, and comrades Dro and Terterian on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Armenia for the Party of the Second Part, have signed the following agreement:

1. Armenia is hereby proclaimed an independent socialist soviet government.
2. Pending the call of a congress of the councils of Armenia, a temporary Military-Revolutionary Committee shall take over the government of Armenia.



3. The Soviet government of Russia accepts the indisputable admission into the boundary of Armenia's Socialist Soviet Republic of the following regions, the Province of Yerevan with all its districts, a part of the Province of Kars which from the military viewpoint dominated the railroad line from the Station of Djadjour to the Station of Arax, the region Zangezour in the Province of Gandzak, a part of the Province of Kazakh as defined in the boundary of August 10, and those parts of the Province of Tiflis which were under Armenia's rule on September 28, 1920.

4. The command of the Armenian army shall be exempt of all responsibility for acts done in the ranks of the army until the proclamation of Armenia's sovietization.

5. The members of the Federation (Dashnag) and other socialist parties (Socialist Revolutionaries and Socialist Democrats) will not be subject to persecution for their membership of these parties, nor for having taken any part in the fights against the Communist Party before the proclamation of Soviet Armenia.

6. The Military-Revolutionary Committee shall consist of five appointed members of the Communist Party, and two leftist Dashnags, with the agreement of the Communist Party.

7. The Soviet Government of Russia will take immediate steps to furnish the necessary military force for the consolidation and defense of the Armenian Socialist Soviet Government.

8. After the signing of this agreement, the government of the Armenian Republic will withdraw, and until the coming of the Revolutionary Committee, the military command, headed by Dro, will temporarily take over. Representing the Russian Socialist, Federative, Soviet Republic, Comrade Silin, as Commissar, will have joint powers with the Armenian military command. Two copies.

(Signed)

R.S.F.S.R. Plenipotentiary LEGRAN,  
Plenipotentiaries of the government of  
the Armenian Republic, DRO and  
TERTERIAN.\*

\* \* \*

It was agreed between the two parties that the transfer of the government would be effectuated at midnight, December 2, and to this end an "act" was drafted and released to the press which was immediately wired to the regional authorities, the commanders of the army, and was posted on the walls of Yerevan.

### THE ACT

*In view of the general situation in the land created by external circumstances, the Government of the Armenian Republic, in its session of December 2, 1920, decided to resign from the office, and to turn the entire military and political authority over to Dro, the commander-in-chief, now appointed as Minister of War.*

(Signed)

S. VRATZIAN

*President of the Cabinet*

*Ministers A. Hovanissian, A. Khondkarian, H. Terterian, T. Kanayan.*

*Has been checked with the original  
Secretary, H. Toumanian*

But this was only one side of the question; there was still the question of war. The Turks were well aware of the events in Yerevan and were hastening to forestall them. The evening of November 30, Kiazim Karabekir Pasha presented to the Armenian Delegation the Turkish terms, and the very next morning, by way of an ultimatum, demanded their instant acceptance, threatening, in the contrary event, to resume military operations. The Turkish demands were examined the night of the 30th

\* Collection of Treaties, 3rd bundle, Moscow, 1922, No. 79, pp. 14-15, publication of the Foreign Commissariat of Russia.

in a special session which included the presidium of the Parliament, deputies, members of the government, the entire membership of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation's Bureau, and a number of political and military leaders.

Legran's ultimatum had already been accepted, and now it was time to find a way of avoiding the Turkish harsh demands. Technically speaking, this was already done when it was decided to turn the government over to the Bolsheviks, the presumption being that they could also sign the treaty of peace. But it was a question if this would be the best way out. Speaking for ourselves, this would be an act of vindication because, before history we would be free of the responsibility of signing the shameful Treaty of Alexandropol. The question still persisted, would the Armenian people gain anything by such a procedure?

The implacable question was pitted against all the participants of that meeting that night. If we refused to sign the treaty, would the Turks desist from destroying the rest of Armenia? Would the Bolsheviks be able to exert any influence upon the Turks, would they be able to save the country from the imminent peril? We listened to the opinions of military specialists and their answer was in the negative. Should we refuse Karabekir's demands, the Turkish army in all probability would advance, and by the time Russian troops arrived, the Turks would occupy Etchmiadzin and Yerevan together with the adjoining regions. Later the Russians might be able to chase the Turks out, but by then the damage would have been done. Armenia would be in ruins.

The same view was shared by all the attendants of the meeting. In the name of the salvation of the Armenian people, it was necessary to assume the responsibility before history and sign the treaty. If the Bolsheviks really were as influential with the Turks as they professed, it would not be difficult for them to repudiate the signa-

ture of the Dashnags and to obtain more reasonable terms for Armenia. If the Bolsheviks could not do that much tomorrow, it meant that their promises were wholly worthless. Impelled by these considerations, the meeting decided to authorize the Alexandropol Delegation to accept the Turkish terms and sign the treaty.

I repeat, technically we had every right and every possibility to avoid this distasteful duty and shift it on to the Bolsheviks. That would have been a clever trick on our part, putting the Bolsheviks on the spot, who, as we shall see later, had no more weight with the Turks than did the Dashnags. There is no doubt that the Armenian Bolsheviks would have been obliged to sign the Alexandropol treaty under the pressure of Moscow as one year later they signed the far more shameful treaty of Kars. Individually, or as a party, we could have spared ourselves the contumely of our opponents, if, of course, this time they did not turn around and accuse us of cowardice, thus opening the gates of disaster before Armenia. From the national standpoint, the signing of the Treaty of Alexandropol was a historic necessity, unfortunate but inevitable.

• • •

On the night of December 2 was signed the Treaty of Alexandropol which in essence is the following, as summarized by the President of the Delegation, Alexander Khatisian:

1. The Turkish Grand National Assembly is obliged to recognize the independence of Armenia within the following boundary;—beginning with the southern part of the province of Akhalkalak, the heights of Ouch Tapalar and on south as far as Bash Shorakyal and Arpachay—down along the course of Arpachay to where it merges in the Arax River, along the course of Arax as far as the Arax Station, and from here to Martiros, as far as the Village Chaygent.

2. The Province of Kars and Sourmalu

shall be disputed regions for three years, its final determination being subject to a referendum which shall be called by the Armenian government. A joint Armeno-Turkish gendarmerie shall supervise the elections.

3. The Armenians renounce the Sevres Treaty, shall recall all their committees and representatives now in Europe, shall dismiss all foreign representatives in Armenia until Turkey has signed treaties of peace with them.

4. Armenia shall keep a standing army of not more than 1,500 bayonets and a commensurate officers force, as well as an adequate gendarmerie. Fortresses for the defense of the country are tolerated, with nothing but siege artillery. There will be no military conscription.

5. In the event Armenia is attacked, Turkey will defend the Armenian government at its request and will aid Armenia with active support.

6. Turkey and Armenia shall mutually benefit of free transit, such as railroads and highways.

7. Both sides shall share in the expenses of the war.

8. Immediately upon the signing of the treaty, railway communications shall be resumed, civilian prisoners shall be returned, while the return of war prisoners shall wait until Armenia and Turkey begin to work on the final determination of their mutual boundaries.

9. All the commitments of Armenia against Turkey are declared invalid.

10. All refugees may return home during the course of one year, benefitting from their citizenship rights, except those refugees who have put up armed resistance against their governments.

11. The Armenians in Turkey and the Turks in Armenia shall enjoy equal citizenship rights.

12. Diplomatic and consular relations, as

well as free travel between the two countries shall begin upon the signature of this treaty, while postal and telegraphic communications between the two countries shall be resumed afterward.

13. Sharour and Nakhitchevan shall be autonomous regions temporarily, under the protectorate of Turkey, until the final determination of their status.

14. This treaty must be ratified by the Parliament of Armenia and the Turkish National Grand Assembly within one month.

15. Turkey is obliged to evacuate all occupied regions in Armenia when Armenia begins the demobilization of her army, complete evacuation being effectuated when the Armenian army is reduced to the size as prescribed in this treaty.

\* \* \*

Years later, in his famous speech delivered before the Grand National Assembly, Mustafa Kemal expressed himself as follows in regard to this treaty:

"The peace negotiations which had begun on November 26 were ended on December 2 and the night of December 2-3 the Treaty of Giumry was signed. Gentlemen, the Treaty of Giumry is the first treaty which the national government has signed. . . . As a result of important changes in the East, this treaty was later replaced by another treaty, namely the Treaty of Moscow signed on March 16, 1921, and the Treaty of Kars signed on October 13, 1921."\*

What irony! By the Treaty of Batum, Turkey was the first country to recognize the independence of Armenia, and now, Armenia was the first government to recognize the independence of Kemalist Turkey!

There is one more point which should be noted in connection with the Treaty of Alexandropol and that has to do with its judicial bearing. Bolsheviks and others contend

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\*"Discours du Ghazi Moustafa Kemal," 1929, Leipzig, pp. 390-392.

that, after signing the conditions of Armenia's sovietization with Legran on December 2, the government of Armenia had no right to sign treaties with foreign powers. This may be countered by the fact that, by the terms of the Legran pact, the transfer of the government would take place the night of December 2, and, consequently, until that time the government of Armenia was not limited in its rights. The government had authorized the Khatissian Delegation on December 1 to sign a treaty and, therefore, from the standpoint of international law, the action of the Armenian government was not illegal.

On the other hand, as attested to by Mustafa Kemal and Alexander Khatissian, the treaty was signed the night of December 2-3, namely after midnight of December 2. Could it be contended that this circumstance is enough to question the legality of the treaty? If so, it should be observed again that, after the resignation of the Armenian government, the in-coming government—Dro and Silin—was well aware that the treaty was about to be signed, and could have prevented it if it had so wanted, but it did not. The evening of December 2 the following conversation took place between Alexander Khatissian, the head of the Alexandropol Delegation, and Dro, the representative of the new government of Armenia:

"At 6 o'clock in the evening," relates Khatissian, "Dro called me on the telegraph and said the following: 'In the name of the Revolutionary government I want to tell you that you are free to sign or not.'"

"Realizing fully the entire responsibility of signing or refusing to sign, I asked him the second time: 'Is the government for signing or rejecting? We await clear and definite instructions.'"

"Dro replied: 'I've already told you. Act according to your understanding (use your own judgement). I am speaking for Comrade Selin and myself.' Selin was the rep-

resentative of the Bolsheviks."\*

It is perfectly plain that, not only Dro, but the representative of the Soviet government, too, had no objection to signing the treaty, and, very naturally, could not have any objections under the circumstances. Up to this point the action of both the government and the delegation was legal from the judicial viewpoint. But still, the treaty included one more important point. After the signature, the treaty was to be ratified by the Turkish Grand National Assembly and the Parliament of Armenia. This ratification never took place, and, consequently, the treaty lost its validity. This proof alone was enough for the Bolsheviks to have rejected the Treaty of Alexandropol if they really wanted to obtain more favorable terms for Armenia. But, as we shall see later, they did not want to, or could not take advantage of this fact.

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#### *Sovietization and its Consequences*

Thus, then, on December 2, 1920, Armenia was sovietized and the same night was signed the Armeno-Turkish treaty of peace in Alexandropol. The Bolsheviks themselves insist that the event took place on November 29, as a result of a "peasant-workers' bloody revolution"; however, as proven by the preceding irrefutable facts, no such revolutionary movement took place in Armenia in those days. True, on November 29 a few Armenian Bolsheviks had entered Kazakh and Itchevan and, in the name of the "Revolutionary Committee of Armenia," had proclaimed Armenia a soviet republic, but the incident was so trivial that even Legran paid no heed to it, and three days later, on December 2, he signed a treaty with the Armenian government which

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\* Alexander Khatissian, "The Origin and Development of the Armenia Republic," p. 270.

completely ignored the aforementioned peasant workers' manifesto.

The sovietization of Armenia was a peaceful transition transacted entirely within the scope of the law. There was no bloodshed, and no one was hurt. From the judicial viewpoint, one government retired to make room for the new. But the people "were silent." To be entirely fair, it must be stated that a part of the people secretly welcomed the change in the firm belief that, after all, the new-comer was the Great Russia, the memory of whose power and wealth was still fresh in their minds. The Russian was coming, bringing with him bread and peace!

But instead of the Russian, it was the Revolutionary Committee which entered Armenia, accompanied by several hundreds of mangy military and Armenian Bolshevik riff-raff, many of them known for their participation in the May uprising, such as S. Kassian, Ask. Mravian, Avis Nourichanian, A. Hovanissian, Atarbekian and others. I deliberately use the expression "entered Armenia" because the Revolutionary Committee in reality regarded itself as a victorious power which had entered the country in order to grind under its feet the defeated enemy.

In spite of the exceedingly friendly attitude of the people and the members of the former government and their willingness to cooperate with and to support the new government, from the first day the Revolutionary Committee assumed a hostile attitude toward all non-Bolshevik elements in the country and conducted itself more like a conquering enemy. The treaty signed with Legran was declared null. On December 6 the Cheka was organized which immediately set to work making arrests. One after another imprisoned were the former Prime Minister H. Ohanianian, former minister of the cabinet A. Chilingarian (Reuben Dar-

binian), members of the Parliament Dr. H. Ter Davidian, Vahan Navasardian, V. Babayan, K. Varshamian, member of the Yerevan City Council A. Astvadzatrian, Social Democrat leader B. Ishkhanian, General Hamazasp, and others. Soon after, these were followed by President of the Parliament A. Sahakian, assistants of ministers of Health and Agriculture Dr. H. Ter Michaelian and D. Toshian, member of the Parliament Dr. A. Khazarian and many others.

Towards the end of December all the officers of the Armenian army were forced to register, 70 of whom immediately were sent to exile in Baku. On January 10, General Dro, the hero of the Battle of Bash Abaran, together with his topmost officers, was exiled into Russia. On January 24, the remaining officers of the Armenian army, 1,200 in all, including the generals, Silikian, Nazarbegov, Hakhvertian, and Khamazian were exiled into the interior of Russia. In the midst of the bleak winter's cold, escorted by Russian armed guards, on foot, and amid universal mourning, these military pillars of the Armenian army were driven into the frozen regions of Russia.

The country was plagued with endless searches and arrests. All the jails of Armenia were crowded with prisoners. Besides the foregoing, the Bolsheviks took into confinement such distinguished political and cultural leaders as Levon Shant, Hovhannes Katchaznouni, Nigol Aghbalian, the Mayor of Yerevan M. Mousinian, S. Melik Yoldjian and hundreds of others. All the prisoners were kept under insufferable conditions and they lived under the perpetual dread of pending execution.

Meanwhile, in Yerevan and throughout the country there was an orgy of raids and seizures. The newcomers seized everything, —homes, furniture, clothing, foodstuffs, horses, cattle, chicken and eggs, down to such trivials as thread and needle. The



people had been expecting aid from Russia, and now, instead, their last morsel of bread was being plucked and sent to Russia. Truck loads of materials seized from the government storehouses and the people—white flour, condensed milk, cocoa, sugar, shoe leather, clothing, etc., were being rushed to Russia as the "gift of Armenia" to "Comrade Lenin" or "the red army." The Bolshevik historian Borian has described in striking language what actually was taking place in Armenia in those days. We will let Borian speak:

"The Revolutionary Committee," Borian writes, "started a series of indiscriminate and peremptory seizures and confiscations, without regard to class principle, and without taking into account the general economic and psychological setting of the peasantry. Devoid of planned or revolutionary character, and executed with unnecessary brutality, these confiscations were wholly unorganized and promiscuous. Unattended by a disciplinarian machinery, without the preliminary preparatory propaganda or enlightenment, and with utter disregard of the country's unusually distressing conditions, the Revolutionary Committee issued its slogan of seizing and nationalizing the food store of the cities and the peasantry. With amazing recklessness and unconcern, they seized and nationalized everything,—military uniforms, artisans' tools, rice mills, water mills, barber's tools, bee hives, linens, woollens household furniture, regardless of their class status. . . . Naturally, the forcible means were the basic cause of the people's rebellion."\* Borian is of course referring to the February uprising.

And Borian continues to enumerate, one by one, all the illegal decrees and deeds of the Revolutionary Committee. He shows how the Bolsheviks of Armenia flouted Soviet laws and decrees, how they perpe-

trated countless illegal harmful deeds, as a result of which the people who initially had been friendly inclined toward the Soviet government, finally was forced to raise the flag of rebellion against that very government.

Another authority whose testimony may be taken as impartial, and which, at all events, is worthy of credence, is H. Katchaznouni, the First Prime Minister of the Armenian Republic, who, as known, later went over to the Bolsheviks:

"Not later than two months after their entry and establishment in Armenia the Bolsheviks removed the Armenian Tricolor and the national hymn Mer Hairenik as anti-revolutionary symbols, and replaced them with the proletarian red and the proletarian International. The soldiers of the red army were quartered in private homes, ate their bread, and burned their fuel. The officers and party field workers occupied the best homes, their furniture and their beds. The Revolutionary Committee daily issued decrees and orders calculated to strengthen the proletarian dictatorship in Armenia, meanwhile extending and deepening the great world revolution. With inexhaustible energy and zeal, the Cheka carried on its saving mission, so much so there was no room in all the jails of Armenia to drop a needle.

"In the people's (or revolutionary) tribunals, the comrade judges dispensed justice and resolved the disputes among the citizens in accordance with their 'revolutionary convictions,' in the absence of positive law. In the villages, communist cells settled old and new scores with their disliked neighbors. City and domestic committees sprouted in the cities, with vigilant corporals over every ten homes. These corporals and the landlords were charged with watching over the homes and were expected to report immediately to the Cheka the slightest sign of anti-revolutionary activity.

\* B. Borian, "Armenia, Diplomacy and the Soviet Union," Vol. II, p. 126.

"The administrative structure was founded entirely on mutual vigilance and espionage. This duty devolved not only on the appointed officers, but on every citizen. The citizen was obliged not only to be friendly-inclined toward the government, but he was expected to watch over the friendliness of his neighbors and to report all cases of dereliction. If he failed, he was considered as an anti-revolutionary, and was personally responsible to the Cheka.

"The government organ, 'Communist,' daily published massacre-inciting articles, advocating civil war as a necessary means of consolidating the revolution. The victory of the revolution, it wrote, is not assured in Armenia as long as we have had no civil struggle. We need a fight in order to purge all the anti-revolutionary elements, we need a civil war in order to deepen the peasants and workers' class consciousness. The revolutionary proletariat must spill the bourgeois blood in order to render the gulf between the two impassable.

"Speeches of the same content were delivered, and calls were issued in public meetings. The walls were plastered with huge pictures done in the futuristic style, in which the polluted blood of the 'Dashnags' and other 'counter-revolutionaries' flowed like rivers. We might say that blood flowed not only in these pictures but in Chekist dungeons.

"The population of the country was divided into two unequal classes: the Bolsheviks (or those who posed as Bolsheviks) who enjoyed all the privileges; and the non-Bolsheviks (namely the overwhelming majority) who were loaded down with all the obligations, first and foremost among which was the duty of feeding and providing for all the necessities of the Bolsheviks. Half of the Bolshevik zeal was expended on the Cheka and its activities, the other half was spent on searches and confiscations. This applied to everything, beginning with the home to vehicles, burden-bearing beasts,

musical instruments, soap, and needle and thread. It was enough that the bourgeoisie had enjoyed the blessings of life; it was now the revolutionary proletariat's turn to enjoy these things. This was a principle which was carried in all directions, and executed with all consistency and extraordinary zeal.

"The people were surprised, stunned, and terrorized. They could not understand what was going on around them. Could not understand what was it that these strangers wanted of them,—those be-starred, hooded newcomers, armed with Mauser and Nagan revolvers, and those painted, plastered young girls, those countless commissars and comrades, who ensconced in their automobiles paraded the streets of Yerevan day and night. . . . Nor was it the bourgeoisie alone who were stunned; stunned were the working masses who suffered from the Bolshevik order as much as did the bourgeoisie. It was not the latter alone which was being looted, insulted, dispossessed; the same was true of the common people, the multitudes of workingmen who lived by their daily toil, except of course the Bolsheviks who were the privileged class. A man no longer was the owner of his property, his labor. Communism was understood and was being executed in a sense that the possessions of the non-Bolsheviks are the rightful property of the Bolsheviks."

The facts adduced by Borian and Katchaznouni will suffice for an adequate understanding of those internal conditions which eventually brought about the popular, anti-Soviet uprising of February. "This cursory summary of the facts," concludes Borian, "will explain the true causes of Armenia's popular revolt."

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But there was something more than the internal causes which raised the people of Armenia against the Soviet government. Despite their solemn promises and commitments, the Bolsheviks were equally incom-

petent in the conduct of their foreign policy. They had promised, immediately after the sovietization of Armenia, to restore communication with the outside world, to import "bread and manufactured goods" from Russia, to settle the neighboring territorial disputes with the aid of Russia, and to establish friendly relations with Turkey. How then did the Revolutionary Committee tackle these vital problems? How did it justify the hopes of the Armenian people?

Take the problem of inter-communications. After the sovietization, Armenia still was cut off from the outside world. The food-stuffs and materials stored up in Batoum, all the property of the Armenians, were not budged, and Georgia shut her doors tighter than ever against Armenia. The appeals, importunities and threats of the Revolutionary Committee had not the slightest effect on the government of Georgia. Entirely futile was, likewise, the intervention of Moscow. Demands by the Soviet ambassador and by Moscow direct, on December 25, 1920 and January 21, 1921 respectively, for the immediate removal of transit restrictions via Georgia into Armenia, in view of the impending famine, were stubbornly refused by the government of Georgia.

Georgia was likewise unyielding in the question of the boundary dispute. Immediately upon taking over the government, the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia, in a series of successive telegrams, demanded the withdrawal of the Georgians from Armenian territories, and particularly the recall of Georgian troops from the Lori zone. The Georgians absolutely paid no attention to these demands. The following communication dated December 30, 1920, by Foreign Commissar of Armenia A. Bekzadian, and addressed to the Georgian government, is an example of numerous similar appeals:

"Yerevan, December 30 (Radio)—To the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Democratic Georgian Republic:

"In its appeals of December 7 and 10

pertaining to the evacuation by your troops of the neutral zone, the Soviet government of Armenia gave expression to the expressed will of the emancipated Armenian people to return to peaceful life in that part of the country which, although not the immediate battle ground of the warring parties, was nevertheless, during the war with Turkey, converted into a zone of occupation by your troops, with all the attendant hardships on the native population.

"Whereas, in its replies of December 10 and 21, your government has refused to give satisfaction to the very understandable aspirations of the Armenian workingmen's population of the neutral zone, and in view of the argument advanced by you that on November 13 your government concluded a pact with the Dashnags, the government of the Socialist Soviet Republic of Armenia feels constrained to remind you anew of its inability to permit your government to cite the same as a valid reason for the continued occupation of said region inasmuch as, by virtue of the action of your own government, said pact has been rendered null. Your specious insistence that your government has scrupulously observed the conditions of the pact of the 13th is unacceptable to the government of S. S. Republic of Armenia in view of the fact that, even during the first days of the agreement, your troops trespassed the neutral zone border, and occupied Kolageran, Shahali, Jalal Oghli, Nikolayevka, and other undisputed points of Armenian territory; that Georgian commanders have been assigned to all these places; that former Armenian office-holders have been replaced by Georgians; that on November 19 the store house of Kolageran Station was seized and the telegraphic operators, Garegin Haroutunian, Hambartzum Petrosian, and Artashes Shahverdian were arrested without cause, explanation, or order, and were driven to Ashagha-Sarayli; and lastly, that a punitive force has advanced against the peasants of the Armenian

Village of Shenogh, and has bombarded the village.

"Aside from all this, the government of Soviet Armenia likewise cannot agree with the views of your government in regard to the November 13 pact because that agreement is not conditioned by a solitary factual proof. Besides the fact that such an interpretation of the matter generally is unacceptable within the scope of the agreement's inter-relations, as long as the latter always rely on and preserve their legal power only within the limits of those conditions which they are trying to advance, the original text of the November agreement itself fully negates such an interpretation. That original, as the basis of a signed agreement, envisages two contingencies: a potential attack by the Anatolu (Turkish) government on the Armenian Republic, and the resultant creation of a *neutral zone* in view of a potential threat to Georgia herself. After the elimination of both these contingencies, the continued occupation of the neutral zone by Georgian troops loses all justification and is unacceptable to the government of Armenia. After the establishment in Armenia of a new political and social order, and with the advent of new inter-relationships, outmoded are all those artificial ties which have been forced down on the Trans-Caucasian republics by their patrons. Impelled by a sincere desire to make an end of both the neutral zone and those indisputable territories of Armenia which are occupied by Georgian troops, the government of Soviet Armenia, in accordance with the Soviet Government's general policy, as well as those basic principles it has proclaimed, is prepared first of all to explore the possibilities of a peaceful solution of all disputed questions. However, in the interests of an expeditious solution, and to forestall the customary procrastinations in all such circumstances, my government deems it advisable to settle the problem of the neutral zone with the participation of a

representative of U.S.S. Russia. The government of the Socialist, Soviet Republic of Armenia awaits an early reply by your government in regard to this question."

An appeal to Soviet Russia and the latter's subsequent mediation availed nothing. The Georgians were obdurate, and they continued their occupation of Lori, nor restored the railway transit to Armenia.

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The Armenian Bolsheviks were no more successful with "brotherly" Azerbaijan despite the fact that the government of that country was in Bolshevik hands. From the first days of Armenia's sovietization, "Comrade Nariman Narimanov," head of the Azerbaijanian government, in a telegram addressed to the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia, announced that, all disputes between Armenia and Azerbaijan now being definitely ended, Soviet Azerbaijan in fraternal gesture, yields Karabagh to Armenia. Thenceforth, Karabagh was to be a part of Armenia and this was accepted by the Armenians with universal jubilation. What really took place after that no one knows, probably the Turks brought pressure on Moscow, but Karabagh was never united with Armenia. In this connection, in communist circles the current explanation was that Narimanov had made his statement not with the real intention of ceding Karabagh, but as mere propaganda in order to ease the work of the Armenian Bolsheviks. Karabagh was held by Azerbaijan, and Nakhitchewan continued to be occupied by Turco-Bolsheviks.

The hope of getting supplies from Russia likewise proved to be an illusion. In the first place Russia herself was hungry. Secondly, traffic in the bleak winter was difficult, although as we have seen above, such difficulties were no obstacle in the way of transporting Armenia's last remaining provisions to Baku and Moscow.

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Getting along with the Turks was even worse a problem for the Armenian Bolsheviks. They had contended right along that Turkish enmity to the Armenians chiefly being the result of their hatred of the Dashnaks, Armeno-Turkish relations would immediately be improved, and the Turkish army would at once evacuate Alexandropol and Kars, once Armenia was declared a Soviet republic and the Turks were extended the brotherly hand. Inspired by this spirit, the first "declaration" (manifesto) of the Revolutionary Committee included the following lines dedicated to the Turks:

"The Revolutionary Committee of Armenia firmly believes that it enjoys the full confidence and sympathy of the workers of Turkey - - - the people which at last has grasped the imperative necessity of shaking off the centuries-old insufferable yoke of the Entente, as well as its call to play an important role in the revolutionizing of the East. We firmly believe that Turkey, newly liberated from imperialistic shackles, counting us an equal enemy of the Sevres Treaty, will immediately extend us the brotherly hand the minute we overthrow the enemy (the Dashnaks) and join in the common cause of fighting against the vultures of the Entente (meaning the Allied powers—Tr.). We are likewise convinced that it is not the victor's sword which will dictate the forthcoming peace treaty between Soviet Armenia and the workingmen's Turkey, but the fraternal cooperation and concord of the free peoples of these two countries."<sup>\*</sup>

What was the answer of "workingmen's Turkey" to the "fraternal hand" extended by the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia? "It turned out," writes Borian, "that the Revolutionary Committee had over estimated Turkish friendship. The Turkey of the workers and peasants has more than once manifested her sympathy toward Ar-

menia and the Armenians! *By treaty agreement she forced Soviet Russia to bear down on Soviet Armenia!*" (Vol. II, p.151).

As a matter of fact the sovietization of Armenia meant absolutely nothing to the Turks whose attitude toward the Armenians remained unchanged; they did not evacuate Alexandropol, did not make an end of the persecutions, the oppression, the lootings, and the massacres in the Armenian regions occupied by them. Armenia was occupied by Russian troops, the regime was soviet, in Alexandropol sat the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia which had extended the "fraternal hand" and was breaking its neck to prove to the Turks that, unlike the Dashnaks, it was friendly to the Turks, and Yerevan kept sending feverishly assurances of friendship to Ankara; and yet all these were not enough to budge the Turk from his hostile attitude. On the contrary, these measures further provoked him on the assumption that the Armenians were again clinging to Russia's skirts in order to continue their traditional Russophile policy. Yerevan kept flooding Ankara with "fraternal" dispatches, while the Turks repulsed these overtures by replying that they saw no difference between the Dashnaks and the Armenian Bolsheviks. Meanwhile, right before the eyes of the Russians, Turkish troops continued to devastate ruthlessly the Armenian villages of Shirak, to destroy, pillage, and massacre the Armenians by the thousands.

The Revolutionary Committee of Armenia on numerous occasions appealed to Ankara, begging and protesting, to put an end to the atrocities of the Turkish army on the Armenian peaceful population, but all to no avail. The Turks were simply scornful of the Armenian Bolsheviks, seemingly confident that the Russians would not defend the Armenians. The following telegram of A. Bekzadian, Foreign Commissar of Armenia, dated January 21 and addressed to the Turk-

<sup>\*</sup>Borian's book, Vol. II, p. 151.



ish government, is more eloquent than words:

*"Ankara, to the Commissar of Foreign Affairs of the Great National Assembly Government of Turkey: copies sent to Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, and Ter Gabrielian, Moscow; to Husseinov, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs, and Atarbekov, Baku.*

"The government of Armenia is profoundly disturbed at sight of these unnatural occurrences which have become chronic and have assumed mass proportions within the bordering regions. According to reliable information, in the provinces of Kars and Ardahan, and in the neutral zone, your occupational troops have been subjecting the peaceful working population to ceaseless persecutions, pillaging, and massacres. In these occupied regions, Turkish troops have seized supplies and effects which are the property of the Armenian government, have looted personal effects, have driven away the peasants' cattle and livestock and have confiscated their last provisions. Thus, during the last month, in Alexandropol alone, all agricultural implements, railroad locomotives and coaches, telegraphic and telephone implement, automobiles and personal property have been seized and moved abroad. The province has become desolate, and all the livestock has been driven away. The huge store of food grain in the Station of Nalband, the savings of the peasants of the neighboring villages, has been shipped to Turkey, leaving those peasants in danger of starvation.

"All labor hands between the ages of 18 to 50 have been uprooted from their homes, they have been stripped of their clothes made of flour sacks, and in the cold of the winter they have been driven to labor camps in the regions of Sarikamish and Erzeroum. Besides, representatives of your military forces have tried to exile fugitive companies from Karakillisse, via Kars to Erzeroum,

likewise to be consigned to forced labor under similar conditions.

"In Kars, after the occupation of your troops, atrocities, massacres, and pillaging, have assumed mass proportions which in a modified form continue to this day. The entire fuel supply of the above-mentioned villages has been seized, not excepting the fuel of the orphanages. The male population has been driven to Sarikamish and Erzeroum, their food supplies have been seized and their cattle driven away. In the regions of Aghboulaz and Hamamlu, armed companies of your troops have raided the Armenian villages, pillaging, massacring, and raping the women. Such an event took place in the village of Koulindji on December 13. On December 26 after the 36th regiment of the Turkish division had occupied the Village of Kaftarli, nine youths of the village, all members of the Communist Party, (here follows the names), following the completion of their labors, were brutally murdered in the village infirmary. Their corpses were carried away in a horse cart, the property of Stepanos Boyadjian, a native of Kaftarli, and to cover the traces of the crime, the owner was later murdered. On January 13, a company of Turkish soldiers, without any provocation, attacked the Village of Yeganiat and subjected it to a fierce fusillade.

"In the villages of the neutral zone, the atrocities, massacres, and pillages on the peaceful Armenian population have become customary occurrences. In the region of the Fourth Commissariat alone more than 200 such murders have been listed. The population of the region have been subjected to a reign of terror, the villagers' town and home economy has been ruined, their livestock has been seized, and under pretext of taxation, the villagers have been robbed of their necessities of life. Within the neutral zone, raids by armed forces have become a chronic occurrence, and if this continues, there will be a repetition of Alex-

andropol where more than 50 villages have been destroyed.

"As to the population of Alexandropol, aside from the fact that all communication and traffic has been shackled as a result of your control over the telegraphic agencies (not even excluding the Revolutionary Committee), and despite the fact that none of our comrades are permitted to come out of Alexandropol, we have nevertheless been able to prove conclusively that the government of the Revolutionary Committee in the city surrounded by your troops is nothing but a fiction and can be a real authority only insofar as it suits the purposes and aims of your military command.

"The perpetual demands and ultimatums submitted to the Revolutionary Committee by your military command, have no relation whatsoever to the mission and the function of that body as an official organ of the Soviet government (such as supplying hands for forced labor, the demand for delivery of 10,000 rifles, the surrender of the persons who have killed Turkish soldiers, although no one knows who was killed, where and when, etc.) all these have combined to degenerate the authority of the Revolutionary Committee of Alexandropol and for all practical purposes has reduced that body to a mere tool of the occupational forces. As a consequence, the Revolutionary Committee of Armenia is forced to disregard the existence of such an organ (meaning agency or subsidiary authority—Tr.) inasmuch as such an impotent body cannot but discredit the prestige of the Soviet government in the eyes of the masses and the citizens. Wherever there exists a military occupation of this sort, and where enslavement and destruction are rampant, there can be no peasant and workingmen's government.

"An impartial analysis of the above-mentioned facts make it obvious that the government of Soviet Armenia cannot tolerate similar acts on territories which it regards as its legitimate property, because such acts

obviously are intended to ruin the country economically, and to condemn its population to starvation and artificial annihilation. The government of Soviet Armenia is, therefore, obliged to look upon the operations of your military command as measures calculated to bring about inevitable blood-letting and economic ruin in those regions which during the war, thanks to Turkish military successes, have fallen under their temporary rule and which must be restored to their legitimate government. The universally admitted disciplinarianism of your troops and your soldiers' unquestioned sympathy toward the Soviet government leave no room for any doubt that the above-mentioned acts of violence are not spontaneous operations, a fact which further strengthens the significance of perpetrated irregularities.

"In the name of the workingmen's population of Soviet Armenia which, after taking over the Soviet government, has shown its warm wish to live peacefully and fraternally with revolutionary Turkey, and which has been delivered once and forever of the nationalistic yoke, I am compelled to point out that the above-mentioned facts, as a menace, may pose as a substantial obstacle in the way of the realization of the revolutionary problems of Soviet Armenia and emancipated Turkey.

"Fully convinced of the total absence of any differences of opinion pertaining to the above-mentioned facts, my government entertains no doubt that the Turkish government will have no delay in taking up radical measures for the removal of said facts, a step which only can be expedited by the evacuation of the Province of Alexandropol and the northern and eastern regions of Kars. The government of Soviet Armenia firmly believes that her just demands cannot but be recognized by the friendly government of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, and awaits a quick reply advising of the steps taken to make an end of said condition, as an assurance of the Turkish

government's sincere intentions and friendly feelings toward the neighboring Soviet government. January 21, 1921."

(Signed) A. BEKZADIAN

People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs

This telegram, too, met the same fate of its predecessors, as well as succeeding telegrams. The Turks paid absolutely no attention to it. Nor did Moscow move a finger to restrain the Turks. It is not difficult, therefore, to understand the disillusionment and the despair of the Armenian people which followed. "The Soviet government," writes Borian, "did not take one actual step to expel the Turks from Armenia, whereas the people of Armenia were convinced that, after the sovietization of the country, and after the establishment of good neighborly relations with Russia, the Turks no longer would have any cause to stay in Armenia, and that Russia would not permit the Turks to occupy the territories of Armenia. The people were convinced that the Turks had come with Russia's connivance and active support to overthrow the government of the Dashnags and to establish friendly ties with Russia via Armenia. Whereas, it turned out that the Turks had come as conquerors, and the condition of the land was deteriorated,—a thing which the people did not expect from the advent of the Soviet into Armenia. The traditional policy of the Turks toward the Armenians, and conversely, the Armenian's historical hatred of the Turks, had created an insufferably difficult situation for the Armenian masses, and what they wanted was freedom. But they only kept waiting, because the policy of the Revolutionary Committee and of Russia which was based on eastern orientation, convinced the people that the Turks would not withdraw. The people were getting nervous and they offered a fertile field for anti-revolutionary propagandists."\*

The Armenian Bolsheviks of course were

not so stupid or naive not to realize the hopelessness of their situation. They knew that at the very moment Kiazim Karabekir's soldiers were destroying the Armenian villages and exterminating the population unpunished, Mustafa Kemal's representatives were carrying on negotiations with Chicherin in Moscow which eventually ended in the "friendly and fraternal" pact of March 16, 1921, with terms far more harsh than those of the Treaty of Alexandropol.

These were the internal and external, objective and subjective causes, established even by Bolshevik testimony, proofs and documents, which in a short time provoked general disillusionment and resentment in the Armenian people, and finally ended in the popular and elemental uprising of February 18.

Borian is quite right in his judgment when he writes that its foreign policy, particularly the defeats it suffered in the Turkish question, as well as its mistakes on the home front and its general impotence, were the chief causes of the Revolutionary Committee's woeful failure. "All these, resulting in a series of clashes with the population, set the stage for the counter-revolution, scarcely two and a half months after the sovietization of Armenia, to take advantage of the existing favorable conditions and to spring up the revolution. Realizing its impotence, the Revolutionary Committee sought Soviet Russia's aid, and seeking its salvation in escape, under the protection of a small military force, it withdrew and transferred the task of saving Armenia to the Red Army."\*

"The civil war," writes Borian, "was bitterly fought. The rebellion was headed by the Dashnags who were well organized, threatening the Soviet rule in Armenia by the superiority of their forces. Both the rebellion and the remnants of the Dashnag government were subsequently liquidated

\*Borian, Vol. II, pp. 135-36.

Borian, Vol. II, p. 159.

by the Red Army the beginning of April, 1921."\*

The story of the February uprising is beyond the limits of this work. But insofar as it is related to the present subject, it must be stated that the uprising, as admitted by the Bolsheviks themselves, was not the result of a premeditated and pre-planned policy. On the contrary, under existing conditions at the time, no serious-minded person could even think of rebellion. If some day the real story of that movement is written, it will be brought to light that many of the actors who today are being crucified as the authors of a fratricidal war, never took part in those acts which are ascribed to them, or

if they did so, never in the way or form in which they are represented today by men who are blinded by passion and hatred.

The February uprising was the outburst of a popular elemental indignation. Only at the last moment did the Federation (Dashnags) take charge of the unorganized movement and played its role with brilliant success. Proof of this is found in the fact that the government which succeeded the uprising wholly reversed the Revolutionary Committee's atrocious policies and created more tolerable conditions for Armenia and the Armenian people. Today, years later, every participant of that movement recalls with deep emotion and pride those hectic days.

\*Ibid, p. 140.

(To be continued)

## MY ROAD

### LOOTFI MINAS

*I have wanted a road I cannot find,  
At this crossroad I hesitate  
For I see the dark is already near  
And my journey is late.*

*Where is the road that I cannot see  
Among all the roads I pass?  
Perhaps it was nothing but a cloud shadow  
Across meadow-grass.*

# THE POETRY OF ARMENIA

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(Part IV)

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By VALERY BRUSSOV

(The English Translation by Dr. Arra Avakian)

The non-Armenian reader would find it difficult to appreciate the full significance of Patkanian's poetry. The fundamental power of his verses lies in his passionately sincere love of his people, a quality which is recognized in more than one of his panegyrics, and also in his biting satires. Anger and hate are not strangers to real love; and just for that reason alone, one respects and believes the depth of Patkanian's love for his fatherland. For he dared to despise everything that was worthy of despising in his native country. He loosed furious arrows that pierced everything that deserved to be transfixed.

There are poets who, even though sincere in their love for their fatherland, are blind in their love because they adore indiscriminately everything that belongs to the fatherland. There are other poets who are unable to distinguish clearly the object of their affection, just like the love held by a savage beast for forests in which it was born. There are still other poets, moreover, who love their native land only from purely selfish considerations.

Patkanian's nationalism had none of these failings. Love did not blind him. He saw the sins of his people, he saw their wounds, but he also knew what it was in them that he loved. That deep love did not oblige the poet to speak in vague and in-

comprehensible words, but with articulate decision. It was such a great love that it inspired life into the people and into the poet himself, and gave him new vitality, new strength. It is necessary, of course, to be a true child of one's people to comprehend fully the magnitude of the tremendous love for one's nation which was able to inspire such magnificent poetry.

Though Patkanian has written some splendid articles on public observations, all in the Nakhichevan dialect the use of which was widespread in that district, his national fame lies in his lyric poetry. Patkanian's songs were written for the people and therefore lack "individual attention which produces an exquisite language," as Yury Veselovsky said.

Patkanian's language generally comprehends such a mixture of various elements that in his works we find the various Armenian dialects used together. But the poet was still able to find the correct expressions which allowed him to attain his direct goal. Patkanian always placed the most important thought in the first line of his poem. For this reason, his verses impress one as being genuine original creations, which is another reason for the tremendous success enjoyed by his works in all strata of the reading public.

Patkanian's poetry, in many ways, was



the expression of those feelings and sentiments which existed in a confused fashion in others. His language was intelligible to the reader, to the general public, and to the masses, and to such an extent that each reader felt that he himself was the author of the words he read.

The basic value of Patkanian's poetry lies in its ideals, its purpose, and in its expression of intense patriotism. All else is simply ornament. Above all, Patkanian's poetry is the voice of the teacher, of the leader whom the Armenian people of his time needed desperately.

All this is relative only to Patkanian's major works. His prolific pen, however, has given us still other poems on such other subjects as love, beauty, and nature, and the like. A series of his poems have the composition of songs, each verse ending with the repetition of a phrase borrowed from popular poetry, a procedure which gave added strength to his poetry.

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The poetry of Shah-Aziz (1841-1907) is of a different stamp. Shah-Aziz did not possess Patkanian's fighting spirit nor his commanding teacher's voice, although their purpose and comprehension of poetry was alike. Shah-Aziz, the son of a priest who died when the future poet was still a child, was born in the village of Ashtarak in the province of Erivan. He studied at the Lazarian Academy at Moscow, where he began to write poetry, publishing, in 1860, an anthology of his earlier poems. His more serious verses were published in a second book under the title of "Leon's Grief." Not until 1893 did he publish his third and last anthology of verses which, incidentally, is a very small volume.

Besides the composition of his verses, Shah-Aziz wrote numerous articles in various newspapers. For many years and almost to the end of his days, Shah-Aziz taught at

the Lazarian Academy as an instructor of the Armenian language.

As far as we know, Shah-Aziz' life passed peacefully, without serious grief and turmoil. He does not seem to have had literary enemies. During his last years, he enjoyed a general popularity which was the result of his 1865 anthology.

The poetry of Shah-Aziz has been read widely. His poems were popular items of study in the schools and were sung with great affection. Shah-Aziz has been classed in the ranks of the classical writers of the new literature of Armenia.

"Rhetoric," rightly says M. Berberian, "was Shah-Aziz' 'faculte maitress' "—his masterful faculty. This critic points out the "defects of form" in Shah-Aziz' poetry—the strictly unvariegated meter of each poem, the undying meter, and the misrhyming. We may add to this the commonplace and ordinary themes of his poetry—love, nationalism, natural descriptions, reflections on eternity, and other such hackneyed themes, all of which are basic to lyric poetry. In this, we see the true picture of the poet. Shah-Aziz himself declared that it was his conviction that a poet's duty it was "to serve the people with his lyre."

Although Shah-Aziz occupies a place next to Patkanian in Armenian literature, when compared to the latter, he is talentless. He, however, served the same cause—he helped establish a new Armenian language and awaken racial consciousness. In speaking of Shah-Aziz' nationalistic verses, to which he refers as "the poet's discourses on nationalism, but only in the form of poetry," Berberian observes that "the recitational quality of the verses very definitely weakens their force."

In the matter of Shah-Aziz' love poems, the same critic adds, "Despite the mightiness of his love, our poet never allows his external tranquility to be shattered. In him, one never finds an overflow of emotion." Of

his philosophical meditations, Berberian writes: "Having had no philosophical training, he has avariciously touched upon all ideas and ideals that are more or less expressed commonly and daily. For this reason, his analyses are often obscure."

These are the failings which the Armenian critic has found in the poetry of Shah-Aziz; but it should not be implied that he does not appreciate the value of Shah-Aziz' verses. He has not forgotten to point out, for instance, that the poet possessed a "rich and glamorous style," and that several of his poems were "gems of Armenian lyric."

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*Gevorg Dodokhian* was a contemporary of Patkanian and Shah-Aziz. One of his poems, "Tzitzernak" (The Swallow) is a magnificent song, a jewel in the anthology of Armenian poetry, a verse which will live as long as Armenian literature lives and is a matter of study.

Like the French poet Arnaud, Dodokhian the author of *Tzitzernak*, is a poet by virtue of a single poem, and perhaps through that alone he has established for himself a place in the history of Armenian literature.

Together with the above-mentioned founders of the "Russian-Armenian" literature, there were others whose works, like those of the secondary poets of the "Turkish-Armenian" school, had some historical significance. Here we may list *Khachatour Abovian* and *Raffi* who have written some worthwhile poetry. These two writers, however, are famed for their novels, not especially for their poetry. *Ghazaros Aghayan* (1840-1912) was also a novelist who, incidentally, left us the magnificent poem entitled "Jakharaki Yerke" (Spinning Song). Still another group of versifiers have developed on the themes and problems of which Patkanian and Shah-Aziz wrote.

The full and true exposition of the entire wealth of Armenian poetry, however, was destined to be the task of the next genera-

tion, to those poets who were born during the 1860s, and who established themselves in the public regard during the 1880s and 1890s. The history of the literature of all nations has similar periods when poetry suddenly blossoms forth in full profusion, like the cherry tree with the coming of spring. Such a period was enjoyed by the Russian-Armenian school of poetry: during the last decades of the nineteenth century, new poets Hovhannes Hovhannessian, Tzaturian, Toumanian, and Isahakian came forward one after the other to enrich the new literary movement.

*Hovhannes Hovhannessian*, born in 1864, published his first group of poems in 1886. This publication appeared at the time when Shah-Aziz' poetic activities had diminished. Hovhannessian found immediate favor both in the eyes of the critics and of the reading public. From that time to the end of his days, the poet continued his literary activities, sending poems to various periodicals. His works have been published on three different occasions.

Hovhannessian received his higher education at the University of Moscow which made it possible for him to master the Russian language and render several choice translations from Russian poets. He served as a teacher in the Academy of Etchmiadzin for awhile, and later at the Nersesian School, in Tiflis. Still later, he spent some years at Baku as superintendent of the city's schools.\* A highly educated man whose literary tastes were nourished upon the world's classics, Hovhannessian may be considered in many ways to be the founder of the last period of the new Armenian poetry. During his life there were many writers who were direct pupils of Hovhannessian, and friends who were, consequently, subject to his beneficial influence.

The high degree of Hovhannessian's edu-

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\* This article was written in 1916.

cation determined the nature of his poetry. Of course, there is no doubt that his creative ability is developed under the influence of his inner "unconscious" inspiration, as is customary to all poets. From a different point of view, however, it is possible to believe that his creations were the product of a definite and methodical program. It seems that Hovhannessian had proposed to point out all the trends of lyric poetry, and to give examples of each. Songs, panegyrics, elegies, ballads, epics, poems of philosophical themes — all these and other basic forms of lyric poetry have been cultivated under Hovhannessian's solicitous pen. He gave careful attention to technique, far more than his predecessors. His style is fluent and studied, his meter is subject to the strictest rules. The outstanding characteristic of his poetry is his familiarity with popular poetry. Hovhannessian has modified and cultivated several of such ancient songs and legends as the birth of Vahakn and the legend of King Ardashes; he has employed several motifs and styles of the popular lyric, a procedure which rendered his poetry so popular that they are sung as popular songs with the name of the author forgotten. An example of this is his "Arasn yegav lappin dalov" — "The Arax flowed by with lapping waves." A greater reward than this no poet could expect. Hovhannessian, then, was a real poet, a national poet. That tie which binds the new poetry and the popular poetry is peculiar generally to the "Russian-Armenian" school, which has kept closer contact with "western currents," that is, the new European literature, is apparent in his works. We find the same intimate relationship with popular poetry in the works of Toumanian and Isahakian.

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*Hovhannes Toumanian* (born in 1869) is a more fiery and direct poet than Hovhannessian. Born in mountainous Lori, Toumanian seems to personify the southern type

in which two elements, fun and genius, are marvelously balanced. He was in many ways self-taught; he read through numerous works in an unsystematic fashion; he loved Armenian antiquities; he was body and soul with the customs and traditions of the people, and their mode of living. We are almost justified in calling him the "father" of the new Armenian poetry because a new generation was springing up and bringing with them new ideals. Toumanian represented the literary life of Tiflis of his time. As a poet, his popularity was gigantic; and his general popularity is becoming even greater through his juvenile books, fairy tales, legends, fables, and the like, almost all in verse form, which children eagerly read. Thus it is that the coming generations will learn to love literature and poetry and the mother language through reading Toumanian. While busy writing poetry, moreover, Toumanian found time to contribute gladly articles relating to history and literature to the local Armenian press. It would seem that in all of Tiflis there was not a being who was unfamiliar with the expressive, snowy-white hair of this man, and who did not love this wonderful creature and magnificent writer.

It is impossible to see in Toumanian's creations any methodical system, such as appears, unjustifiably of course, in Hovhannessian's poetry. Toumanian's creations overflow unrestrainedly like the waters of spring, are subject only to the capricious inspirations of an artist. Toumanian's poetry usually bears the mark of the talent of an extemporaneous creator, a quality which, however, does not sully the works of the artist though some of them have been subjected to one or two alterations. His verses reach their highest state in his lyrical narratives. In these poems, indeed, we find evidence of extensive familiarity with popular life and his deep discernment of the souls of the people.

If a person from some other nation were to read some of Toumanian's poetry, for example "Anoush," he would learn more about contemporaneous Armenia and its life than he might learn if he were to read voluminous treatises on the subject. In his keen and lively style the poet reproduces the genuine art of the people; but he does that as an artist, recalling unforgettable pictures, but not so much individual pictures as much as typical pictures. A certain carelessness found in Toumanian's verses is completely overshadowed by his delicate understanding of meter and his superb mastery of euphony.

All in all, Toumanian's poetry represents Armenia old and new which is resurrected and painted in his verses with superb skill. In his children's legends, Toumanian has given delightful specimens of simple unartificiality and gentle satire. He has done, in addition, poetic translations from the Russian, from Pushkin for example, and from others. Those translations manifest clearly how he has been able to penetrate into the soul of the original author and to divine the real essence of the work he translated. These translations, because of these talents, are extremely attractive.

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*Avetik Isahakian* (born 1875) represents a third type of poet. Being ten years younger than Hovhannessian and six years younger than Toumanian, Isahakian did not escape those influences from which his elder literary brothers were free. His destiny, furthermore, was different; before him opened broader horizons. He went abroad in 1893 before he had completed his studies at the Academy of Etchmiadzin. He worked in Vienna and attended lectures in Leipzig. At a later date, he again visited Europe where he stayed for some time.

Because of the fact he became quite familiar with European literary circles, Isahakian bore the influence of the "symbolist"

school which, during the latter part of the nineteenth century dominated all of Europe's literature. It is necessary to observe, however, that Isahakian looked upon Armenian poetry more as a philosophy rather than as a literary form. Then again, certain incidents in the personal life of the poet have left their imprint upon the character of the poet and have deprived him of that completeness which gives so much fascination to the poetry of Hovhannessian and Toumanian.

We find in Isahakian's poetry a certain refraction, a rupture, which does not exist in his senior brethren poets and which, however, gives his poetry a unique keenness. Isahakian's verses are as full of suffering, restless, and forceful as Hovhannessian's poetry is sedate and serious, or as Toumanian's works are joyful and emotional—speaking of course of a poet's general tendency and not of any particular poem.

We may divide Isahakian's rich literary products into two classes in which the poet has neared the sphere of the popular lyric. Several of his poems seem to be the creations of unknown singers, a new series and type of popular song. In these poems, Isahakian has employed all the general motifs of the popular song with such mastery that the poet offered a new technique. This type of poem binds Isahakian to the poetry of Hovhannessian and Toumanian. He therefore may be considered the expressive representative of the "Russian-Armenian" school, one who sustained the best traditions of past Armenian literature.

The other part of Isahakian's creations is composed of his philosophical poems and a large part of the poem "Abu-Lalla-Maharri" in which we find, in singular simplicity, the influence of the symbolist school. In this work, Isahakian appears as a European poet, touching upon the same or similar problems which the poets of France, Ger-

many, Russia, and others, have attempted to analyze.

These poems convince us definitely that Armenian literature has a great master in the person of Avetik Isahakian. Incidentally, the hero of his most important poem is an *Arab* poet, and his work is entirely imbued with the characteristic luxury and delectations of the Orient. In this, Eastern influence enjoys a victory over the representatives of the Russian-Armenian school, just as Western influence is discernable in the works of Turkish-Armenian writers.

Hovhannes Hovhannessian, Hovhannes Toumanian, and Avetik Isahakian are a sort of constellation of *three stars* in the heavens of Armenian literature. The historical path to be taken by those three poems will be laid by the work of these three poets; and the future development of Armenian poetry will depend—and this is already true—partly upon the progression of those principles which they advanced, and partly upon the victory which this triumvirate has won; for the continuation of the "old" with the "new" always leads to chaos and ruin.

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The most outstanding of the other poets of the time is *Alexander Tzaturian* (1865-1911). Because of his influence upon his contemporaries, he does not fall behind the three aforementioned poets in importance. Being of the same period as Hovhannessian, Tzaturian came forth at that favorable time when the Armenian populace was awaiting a new poet.

Tzaturian's fame commenced with the publication of his first poems. Having received his education under difficult circumstances, having blazed his own trail by his own efforts, Tzaturian firmly devoted a large part of his poetry, especially those poems in the latter period of his life, to the exposition of common problems.

Besides these poems, Tzaturian has produced some excellent specimens of lyric

poetry the subjects of which were those everlasting themes—love and the beauty of nature. Having developed his literary taste principally by study of the finest creations of Russian poetry, Tzaturian gave special attention to his language.

In that regard, his poems even then constituted a very real step forward, a thing recognized by his contemporary critics. What united him firmly with his contemporary poets was that same popular quality of his poetry which we saw in the works of all the representatives of the Russian-Armenian school.

As a translator of poetry, Tzaturian occupies a conspicuous place in Armenian literature. Although Hovhannessian and Toumanian have also given their mother literature several choice translations, these have been results of only chance inspiration. Alexander Tzaturian, on the other hand, consciously and systematically devoted himself to translation. His choice translations from the works of Pushkin, Lermontov, Nekrasov, Koltzov, Nikitin, and Pleshcheyev have been collected into two volumes. Tzaturian has translated, in addition, Turgenev's "Prose Poetry," Guy de Maupassant's "Three Tales," Schiller, Byron, Hartmann, Hugo, Heine, and still other works.

Other poets of the same generations worked along with these more famous writers mentioned above. Of these, the writer *Derenik Demirjian* should be the first to be mentioned. Being busy with other occupations, Demirjian did not have the opportunity to cultivate fully his own talents, to make them blossom. Derenik Demirjian has only a very limited number of verses bearing his name. Among these there is one choice poem concerning Timurlane, and another entitled "Ashoun" (Autumn). Demirjian, who lived in Tiflis, belonged to Toumanian's literary group and was one of the best poets of that school.



*Leon Manuelian* (born 1864) is more a playwright than a lyricist. He is the author of a novel, "Khorkakouatz Kiank" (*The Shattered Lives*), as well as of several tales and poems. Some of Manuelian's poems have been translated into the Russian; but these do not particularly enhance the reputation established by the more conspicuous poets of his generation. The same must be said of *Lerentz* who appeared as a pupil of Patkanian; but despite the ardent inspiration of his master, Lerentz became a rhetorical critic. *Vahan Mirakian* (born 1875) has, under the pseudonym of "Mir-Gono," contributed but one poem, the "Lalvari Vorseh,"—"The Prey of Lalvar." He may not, consequently, be included in the general development of Armenian poetry.

Leaving to one side some other authors, we recall the poetess "Shoushanik Koorghinian" (1876-1932). After her first efforts in which she was influenced by Isahakian's works, she became inclined towards idealistic poetry in the orthodox Marxist spirit. She is, thus, a singular figure in Armenian poetry. Her poetry is full of animation.

*Hakob Hakobian* (b. 1869), and several other more youthful poets, have trod the same general path. Thus it is that we have sketched the picture of the older generation of poets of the "Russian-Armenian" school,—of those poets who flourished during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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During this same period, the poetry of the "Turkish-Armenians" followed its own course, generally conforming to the development of the literature of western Europe, and particularly that of France. The poets of western Armenia, then, indisputably came under the influence of the French "Parnassian School" which requires, above all, perfection of form and the resignation

of the poet from the contents of his work—the non-existence of the poet and of the individual in his analyses and in the picture he creates.

The "Parnassian" trend has produced a definite lack of warmth in all writings that have conformed to its dictates but, on the other hand, has abetted the growth of plasticity in poetry and has raised to a high degree of perfection the technique of verse. These qualities are apparent in Turkish-Armenian poetry of which a series of choice creations can well boast of the impeccably well-sculptured and well-conceived contents of their pictures—all these, however, at the expense of immediate inspiration and impetuosity.

But the *redeeming feature* in the works of the Armenian poets was the manifested *love toward the fatherland* which imparted to their Parnassian creations a great deal of warmth and life. Several poets, incidentally, were even influenced by the French poets in the matter of theme. Such poets abandoned purely nationalistic subjects and considered the matter of international problems. Even among these poets, however, there are undoubtedly some writers whose works have some such large degree of value that they remain in the forefront along with those poems that deal with national and popular themes related to Armenian life.

The poems of the Turkish-Armenian school instills the Armenian reader with great admiration because, through the medium of the mother tongue, those poets have created a beauty for which the reader would ordinarily seek in foreign poetry. That admiration, however, becomes lost on the foreign reader who might have discovered that same beauty either in the poetry of his own nation, or in the literature of some other and non-Armenian people. The poetry of the Turkish-Armenian school, therefore, is important, historically, only in Armenian

letters. That school has contributed many beautiful and vital things to Armenian poetry. But, for that very reason, its significance is appreciably reduced in the eyes of the non-Armenian reader. The "eternal" themes which the Turkish-Armenian school developed with so much love and success—that perfection and handsomeness of form which it has developed in its best creations,—are familiar to the Russian reader, for example, by virtue of the poems of his own poets, and by the works of the French Parnassians.

We feel it necessary to note further that the Turkish-Armenian school has not produced one poet who can equal in the impetuosity and richness of his creations the illustrious poets of the Russian-Armenian school. Peshiktashlian's and Toumanian's stature has not been attained by any poet.

Those poets of the Turkish-Armenian school who correspond to the generation of Hovhannessian, Tzaturian, Toumanian and Isahakian are: Mrs. Sybil, Shant, Chobanian, Malezian, and Tekeyan. About the works of Demirjibashian we are unable to say much since, for various reasons, we have been unable to familiarize ourselves with them. Although younger than these poets, Metzarentz may also be considered as one of this group by the nature of his poetry. Even among these poets, however, there has not been one individual who has created a world of his own, like, for example, Toumanian. Yet all of them, without exception, were lyricists. They have not, moreover, covered broad fields, have touched upon limited problems.

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*Levon Shant* (b. 1869) is more a playwright than a lyricist. His dramas have become extremely popular, his "Hin Ashtoutzner" (The Ancient Gods), being translated into the Russian.

Shant's position as a poet is restricted since he has written only speculative poetry.

As a philosopher-poet, he has created a few marvelous poems which are deep in thought and daintily executed. Shant's poetry possesses a unique fascination, having perfect harmony between form and content. These two qualities in Shant are indissolubly united; and it would seem that a given thought could be expressed in a given picture, and no other.

*Mrs. Sybil* (Zabel Asadour) (1863-1934) has produced a series of delightful poems which are on a par with the best works of her contemporary French poets. In her poetry there is something characteristically feminine, a quality quite rare in Armenian poetry.

There is spiritual expression in the verses of *Malezian* (b. 1873).

*Misak Metzarentz* (b. 1873), whose early death put an end to his career, wrote formal metered verses masterfully.

*Vahan Tekeyan* (b. 1877) is the most versatile and diversified of these poets. He was, furthermore, nationally minded, loving to touch upon themes relating to Armenian life, and upon those problems pertinent to Armenia's destiny. One finds in Tekeyan's poetry an echo of Peshiktashlian and Toumanian. He more than any other may be considered their immediate heir. Tekeyan's mastery of form binds him to the Turkish-Armenian school for, like the others of that school, he achieved real perfection in the matter of form. On the other hand, Tekeyan approaches the Russian-Armenian school through his subjects which are peculiar to Russian Armenian poets. An example of this is his employment of the theme of the legendary light of the Illuminator.

*Arshak Chobanian* (b. 1872) occupies a unique place in Armenian literature. An indefatigable and prolific writer, he has performed an invaluable service to his mother literature. He has published original manuscripts of forgotten Armenian writers; he has translated into French specimens of

popular and medieval Armenian lyrics which he has collected into one volume; he has edited an Armenian periodical in Paris; he has delivered lectures on subjects pertinent to Armenian life; and he has done many other such useful things. No one has done as much as Chobanian to familiarize the western world with Armenia. For all this, the Armenian literature is grateful to Arshag Chobanian.

His own particular creative ability is less significant in the field of poetry, with which he has acquainted the European reader through the publication of an anthology of his poems in French, his own translation. Most of Chobanian's poetry is sometimes well written imitations of the works of the new French poets Baudelaire and Verlaine.

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It is generally justifiable to say that the two schools—the Russian-Armenian, and the Turkish-Armenian,—thanks to the great talents of individual poets, have performed their mission in the nineteenth century. The former has continued and developed the traditions of the old Armenian literature and has retained a firm bond with popular poetry and life; the latter has perfected technique and has impressed into Armenian literature the ideas and elements of western writing. As we have already pointed out, the Renaissance of Armenian literature took place in this manner—with new form, new clothing, and even from its beginnings following two distinct courses, the Eastern and the Western.

A more analytical attitude toward the burning problems of life has filtered into Russian literature, and this trend has undoubtedly influenced the poets of Russian-Armenia. And too, Armenian literature leaned to perfection of form and style through the influence of French literature on the western Armenian poets.

Efforts to unite these two tendencies were made by the poets of the succeeding generation whose works have only recently been developed.

*Vahan Terian* (1885-1920) is the most famous of the young Russian Armenian poets. The first collection of his works, which appeared in 1905, was hailed as the product of a man of great talent; but the critics differed in the matter of appreciation of his poems. Being a disciple and pupil of the symbolist school, Terian tried to lend to Armenian poetry all that which European poetry, especially the Russian and French poetry, had attained during the last decades.

Terian, then, employed themes that had not hitherto been included within the scope utilized by Armenian poets. He sought new meters for Armenian poetry; he showed unusual care to rhyme. He also executed several excellent translations from the newest Russian and French poets. All these tendencies mark Terian as one like the western poets; with his profound inspirations, however, with his new approach to problems, with his language and style, and with his general outlook, Terian remained faithful to the basic traditions of the Russian-Armenian school. Only the future can give proper appreciation of Terian's creations.

The same may be said of those young poets who are still young and the value of whose creations are still undetermined. Among these we may mention *Ter-Martirosian* and the two poetesses *Leyli* and *Armenouhi Tigranian*. As far as one can judge from the few works she has published to date, Leyli is a talented writer. She has proposed no "projects." Artlessly, but not without actual, direct artistry, she has reproduced in poetry her personal joys and especially, and more often, her sorrows.

It is significant that while the Russian-Armenian school, through Vahan Terian and his contemporary poets, was trying to

perfect verse technique and render it subject to stricter requirements, the Turkish-Armenian school, on the other hand, in the persons of its young representatives, was attempting to widen and deepen the scope of poetry. This is particularly noticeable in two young western Armenian poets—*Daniel Varoujan* and *Siamanto*, the pen name of Adom Yarjanian. At present, it is still difficult to tell what may be expected of them in the future. There is a sad rumor that two poets have died a tragic death in the terrible days during the early part of the war, and there are contradicting rumors that they succeeded in escaping the violence of the Turks.\*

In either event, that which Varoujan and Siamanto have already written are sufficient to make a place for them in Armenian literature, and to determine their literary tendencies.

Varoujan and Siamanto, like many other western poets, were unable to escape the influence of French poetry. They imitated, however, not the symbolist trend which no longer was prominent, but the later French poetry in which the problems of life were approached. As we already know, that effort to escape the "ivory tower" was most strongly expressed in the creations of Emil Verharn; the echo of his poetry actually resounds in Varoujan's poetry. The influence of the French "verslibrist"—the same Verharn—, of Vrillet-Griffin, and others, is shown in the form and uneven lines of the poetry of Varoujan and Siamanto.

The young Armenian poets learned from their French co-writers not only their technique, but also adopted the bond they had tied with surrounding reality. Contemporary life as well as the soul-tormenting problems of the time found expression in the verses of Varoujan and Siamanto not

through mere rhetoric, but through vivid pictures which soared to the heights of symbolism.

Varoujan was the stricter and coarser writer, while Siamanto was the more lyrical and effeminate. Both, however, were genuine poets.

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The world war must surely alter in many ways the condition of the Armenian people. And those changes will naturally affect Armenian literature and Armenian poetry. We may hope that the *two divisions of the Armenian people* which have for so long lived apart from one another will now near one another, that the western Armenians will extend a hand to the eastern Armenians, and that the two elements or "schools" of Armenian literature will dissolve as separate units and become a single entity. There are already some sure indications of that rapprochement; and in the event that the merger is successfully achieved, the fundamental merits of western Armenian poetry—the cultivation of style and superiority of form—will be coupled with the fundamental merits of eastern Armenian poetry—the profundity of content and the closeness to the traditional elements. And that would represent the first step of Armenian literature in the direction of realizing anew the century-long proposition, the discovery of the *synthesis of the East and the West*. But of course, there is the old saying that "prophecy is a difficult task."

It is easy to point out those who are talented among the young Armenian poets of today. However, talent is a thing of chance, a gift from heaven, just as are blue eyes. Will the future years produce new talent? If so, what sort of talent? To foresee the future is beyond our capacities. Nevertheless, if we judge from what we know of Armenian literature in the past, then we can safely say that there exists a broad perspective. We find that in Armenian popular poetry and in

\* Varoujan and Siamanto met with death on their way to exile in 1915.—ED.

Armenian medieval poetry there is an inexhaustible source of inspiration.

The *first problem* for Armenian future poets is to delve into this vivifying source, and to take from it the hidden motifs and subject them to new cultivation according to the modern technique and the modern spirit. The *second problem* is to be well acquainted with the first and to be receptive to the contents of past Armenian literature, to seek and show to the world a new synthesis of those two century-long elements under which mankind lives and which is so clearly expressed in the history of Armenia—the Western and Eastern influences. To reconcile these two elements in a superior union, as did the medieval Armenian poets in the second period of their development, would be to realize the traditional mission of the Armenian people. The *third problem* is to reveal and emphasize the popular national spirit at all times, and in all ways. The world's poetry has been fittingly likened

to a divine lyre every string of which represents a separate people. Perhaps the most important calling of Armenian national poetry has been to make its string play with the sound of its own essential, characteristic sound which differs from that of the others, and at the same time to make it harmonize with the tones of the other strings, producing a complete, orchestral melody.

The fiery rays of Armenian popular poetry have always penetrated successfully the dark clouds which have so often obscured the horizons of Armenian history. They have penetrated the terrible, stifling darkness which has so often enveloped the life of the Armenian people. Those rays still release their vivifying and sparkling radiance; and that sparkle seems to us the best covenant for Armenia's historical destiny. Quoting Turgenev, we may say with conviction:

"It is possible to believe that a people possessing such poetry will have a great future!"

THE END





# HAMPIK'S LOVE

By YEROUKHAN

(Translated by James G. Mandalian)

Hampik was a street urchin, an impish busybody, and the perfect miniature of the future scamp who either chases the fire engine or sells fish on the public mart in a raucous, strident voice. His mother, a long-shoremen's washerwoman, had brought him up until he was two years old, giving him a piece of dry bread which the baby gnawed on from morning till evening. One day his mother died of asphyxiation, caused by the carbon dioxide of half-baked charcoal. His father, a fisherman, having died earlier in an accident at sea, Hampik became an orphan at the age of six. He became a derelict with scarcely a place to bunk at nights, or a piece of bread to eat in daytime. Yet this cruel life did not kill him; on the contrary, it endowed him with a powerful body and an indomitable will to live.

Having had no idea of happiness or a life of comfort, he regarded the life he was living as the happiest in the world. He wandered in the streets from daybreak till night, rendering various kinds of services, such as carrying water, running errands, and other little things. He used part of his earnings for his daily needs, while he set the other half aside for a rainy day. Some day he intended to start a business of his own which would be more profitable. His diligence and initiative won for him the sympathy of all. Oftentimes, when he was unemployed, he ran to the wharf and made a neat little sum by carrying the luggage of ships' passengers.

He had established his quarters in a section of the town which was more or less respectable, and whose residents were tolerably well-to-do. As the confirmed brat of his ward, in his loafing hours, he entertained the people with his jokes and his imitations of the animals and the birds, and especially he amused the little boys and girls who flocked around him each evening, begging:

—Come now, Hampik, give us the imitation of a cat.

Then the little scamp would give the imitation of one of those cat fights which invariably ended in the flight of the male cat, namely himself. The shrieks and the screams of the little girls gave him infinite pleasure. Having never known the tenderness of a mother, a sister, or any loved one, driven by that secret force which lives deep in the heart of every man, and which, on the proper occasion, wells up and bursts forth, Hampik involuntarily felt a sort of sympathy, an emotion which bordered on love, toward those little innocent creatures, so much so that, to listen to their charming chatter and to satisfy all their childish desires had become an irresistible necessity for him.

One day, toward evening, Hampik went to the wharf to see what he could pick up. As the steamer docked, a crowd of street urchins who had been anxiously waiting there, like hungry wolves, made a dash for the passengers to be the first to carry their luggage. But Hampik was

clever. He never hurried until he had picked the "juiciest" customer of them all. This particular evening, as the passengers were disembarking, Hampik espied a gorgeously dressed young lady holding two goodly-sized suit cases. As he picked up the two cases, Hampik for a moment looked at the girl's face, then asked her where he should take them.

"You just follow me," the young girl said in a vibrant, melodious voice, with a commanding accent.

Hampik docilely followed the girl, a bit agitated by her imperious looks, as well as the maddening perfume which exuded from her body. He had never felt such a thing until then,—the swish of her clothes, the proud clink of her small shoes on the pavement, the coquettish waving of her yellow-ribboned umbrella, and especially that milk white flesh of the nape which shone through the opening of her V shaped collar. All these intoxicated Hampik, and his delight was so immense that he wished this thing would keep on and on, forever. Suddenly the young girl stopped in front of a door, and without turning to Hampik, she said:

—Boy, leave them here and go.

She slipped a piaster—a 40 para silver piece—into Hampik's hand. But Hampik did not even look at the coin, stood there petrified for a moment as if shocked by an unpleasant disappointment, then, coming to his senses, he turned away, mumbling in his teeth:

—What a girl! What a girl! What a neck! I had never seen such a beautiful girl.

That evening he did not return to his usual rendezvous, did not meet the little school girls who, surprised at his absence, commented:

—Where is Hampik? Why didn't he show up? He had promised us to give the imitation of a barking dog this evening.

And that evening, the little girls were a sad lot.

Hampik went to bed without eating his bread that night, so he could sink into his dreams. Until that day Hampik never had such a carnal feeling; he had never lived so intensely. And that evening the temptation had wrought havoc with him. And there, stretched on his cot, he kept mumbling, "Oh, what a neck! What a neck!"

But when he got up in the morning, his face shone, and there was a smile on his lips. He said to himself:

—I'm going to leave this street. I'm going there. I'll have greater pickings there, and who knows? perhaps . . .

He interrupted himself, his eyes sparkled anew, and taking his hand to his forehead, he murmured:

—What a white neck!

He was as good as his word. The same evening he moved to the same street where the girl of his dreams lived, and finally, having found a small hut at the edge of a garden, he moved there his little straw mattress and the remainder of his bric-a-brac. After that, he started to ply his trade, wandering in the street and smiling at everybody in an attempt to win their sympathy, he went on errands, this time more diligently and more vigorously, slinking constantly around her house whose inmate had been the cause of his transfer. At times when he saw her sitting at the window, he watched her face, and especially that white neck which was being caressed by shocks of luxurious black hair. Those furtive transitory glances were a great treat for Hampik.

But when in bed, Hampik was imbued with an intense, infinite sadness, and whenever he stretched his tired legs on his comfortable cot, he murmured:

—Ah, what a neck!

In Hampik's worshipful house lived a rich family,—a father, a mother, and two

children, a girl, Siranoush, and a boy. Siranoush was a beautiful, sophisticated girl whose hand was sought by many suitors; both for her beauty and wealth, but being an idealistic and highly exacting girl, Siranoush had repelled all offers of marriage. Finally, one day, she met the youth of her dreams and reciprocated his love.

But the company of a few hours is too brief for the delectation of a newly-born love, and the youth, finding it impossible to make a fresh date,\* put his sentiments on some scented stationery, sealed the envelope, and sent it to his beloved. Siranoush opened the letter with trembling hands and blushing read it from end to end. But being a very young and inexperienced girl, and lacking the courage to take the matter peremptorily into her hands, she hesitated for a few days, always lingering on the passionate protestations of her lover, until she decided to write him a letter and confess her love. On the other hand, she did not know how her letter could be delivered safely and without the knowledge of any busy body, because she dreaded the possibility of the slightest scandal about her name. Finally, after much mulling over, it suddenly dawned on her.

One day, when she was alone in the house, she sat at the window and waited. Hampik, who had been walking back and forth, casting furtive glances at the window, suddenly stood still, scarcely believing his eyes. Could it be possible? But yes, it was true, she was really calling him. To make sure, again he looked at her with a fixed gaze and he saw that there was no longer any doubt. The young lady really wanted to see him.

—How very strange—he mumbled, as he stepped inside the door which was al-

ready opened before him. He was now face to face with Siranoush who was gazing at him with her charmer eyes, as she said:

—Hampik, if I tell you something, will you do it?

—I will do a thousand things if you order me,—Hampik replied with such an undisguised sincerity that the young woman trembled from joy.

—Swear to me that you will not tell a soul what you are going to do for me,—Siranoush added.

—Cross my heart, I swear it.

From under the folds of her festooned corsage Siranoush brought out a letter, looked at it hesitantly for a moment, then, bending low, she whispered something into Hampik's ear. Taking advantage of the girl's stance, Hampik critically observed the white neck, and sighed deeply to himself:

—I wonder, I'm to take this letter to Monsieur Aram, very well, but why is she sending him a letter? I wonder what she's written in it. Aha, I get it. It means they're cooking up something. Shall I deliver it or not? On the other hand it will be a good thing if I deliver it, because, of course, she'll send other letters. Meanwhile, five piasters is not a bad haul, but, instead of the money, if she might . . . Ah that white neck . . .

He stopped short. He did not dare utter the thought which had flashed through his mind like lightning.

After that, every time he crossed in front of the window, Hampik openly and unashamedly smiled at the girl, who interpreted the smile as an expression of his gratitude for the five piasters.

Hampik was not wrong in his calculations. A few days later, one evening, at dusk as he was passing in front of the door, Siranoush slipped him another piece of paper, and said:

\* Formerly in the old country, custom prevented an engaged couple from seeing each other publicly until their marriage. — Tr.

—To the same address, Hampik.

Hampik pocketed the coin and delivered the letter. Four days later another coin and another letter. And each time Hampik became richer by five piasters. On the fifth instant Hampik balked. He pushed the coin aside, saying:

—I want no more money.

—Then what do you want?

Hampik came closer, in his eyes was the entreasy of a cringing dog, he laid a gentle hand on the girl's arm, and with a trembling voice whispered in her ear:

—A kiss on your neck.

The young girl shrank back with a violent motion, her eyes were burning with indignation, her red lips parted, and in a repressed passionate accent she hissed:

—Get out of here, you scoundrel, get out at once, I say.

Shocked and utterly terrified by the girl's sudden anger, Hampik pocketed the letter and flew off, meanwhile threatening the girl:—You'll be sorry for this, you *Chulik*, you squirt!

\* \* \*

After that Hampik never again appeared in those parts. His sudden disappearance surprised every one. There were inquiries and endless searches, especially the little girls of the street took his disappearance very much to heart:

—Poor Hampik,—they would say,—I wonder if he died of hunger.

Years passed. Miss Siranoush was happily married to the youth of her love who she thought was endowed with all good qualities and whom she verily worshipped. The honeymoon had been sweet as the honey, but, oh, so transitory. The poor girl who cherished a boundless love for her husband was doomed to a bitter disappointment. Her husband turned out to be an unprincipled, shiftless character

who was soon satiated and tired of the bondage of married life, and sought his pleasure in outside attractions.

At first Siranoush wanted to deceive herself about her husband's disloyalty but soon she was obliged to dispel all doubts. Her husband was so indifferent to her that the poor woman, not daring to enlist the help of her parents, particularly because they had opposed her marriage to this youth, finally was obliged to resort to other means. She tried to track down the cause of her husband's indifference, and finally her woman's instinct told her that another woman was the cause of her misfortunes. For days she mulled over her course of action until she reached a decision. She had heard of a famous fortune teller who, besides making accurate predictions, also cured the ills of the afflicted like her with such drugs which were unknown to the medical profession.

Disconsolate and desperate, pressing back her tears, and swallowing her sobs, Siranoush finally called on the fortune teller. The latter was an old woman of sixty, ensconced comfortably in a corner arm chair, holding in her hand a rosary which she kept counting. She received the young customer with extreme tenderness, having scrutinized her with a swift lightning glance as she had entered.

—Come, my daughter, tell me all your troubles.

Siranoush choked down a sob, her cheeks flushed, her eyes were filled.

—Tell me, my daughter, tell me so I can find a cure for your ailment.

The fortune teller's sincere and affectionate tone melted the heart of Siranoush who poured out all her bitterness and grief, beginning with her first love to her present misfortune. She begged her to find some medicine, some cure which would impel her husband once again to seek his hap-

piness in the affection and love of his home.

—Don't worry, my child,—the fortune teller reassured her,—your worry is the least of all worries. In less than a month your husband will be crazy over you.

Then, suddenly, the old woman's face was transfigured, her eyes became half-closed, her lips moved as if whispering something, and her fingers began feverishly to count the beads of the rosary. This lasted a quarter of an hour. Finally she opened her eyes and spoke:

—My daughter, I will now tell you something which you will do exactly as I tell you. Listen well, it's a bit difficult but what can we do, my child? As long as you've come to this pass, you'll have to try anything. Now there is a kind of fish which is called *Levrek*\*, sold only in the fish markets of Beyoghli (Pera) or Galata. The season is late, and I have my doubts if you can find it, but it won't do any harm to try it. Some fish venders keep a stock in order to sell it at a high price. Whatever you do, you must find that fish. The minute you find it, you must come to me. We'll pull out the bones, I will read something over it, then you will roast it, beat it into powder, and when your husband comes home for dinner, you will drop a pinch of the powder in his coffee. You can scatter some of it in his bed, if you wish. If in a month your husband does not go bugs over you my name is not Falji Mariam. Now go, and do what I've told you, my daughter, but you must be sure to do it yourself alone, so no one else will know it.

Siranoush stepped out, somewhat crestfallen but greatly reassured. She decided that very evening, in the dark, and risking everything, to go in search of the fish and pay whatever price they wanted. The street lights of Pera were already lit, there was a light drizzle, and traffic was light.

A stranger woman, her head wrapped in a black shawl, entered the market where Armenian fishermen displayed their variety of fish, the qualities of which they announced in resounding shouts. With timorous steps she approached the first one, and almost in a whisper she asked if he had any *Levrek* in stock. The man looked at her in surprise, scratched his head, and said:

—*Levrek* at this time of the season? Not with me. Go ask another. —Siranoush let out a sigh and turned to another fisherman a few paces away.

—I have no *Levrek*, little sister, but it seems to me Hampik must have some. That rascal keeps everything. Do you see that shop way down to the left? Go in there and ask for Hampik. He'll take care of you.

The young woman found the place and entered inside the door. The tall man who was busy sorting the fish in their baskets, turned around. He was facing the woman.

—Are you Hampik?—she asked him.

Hearing this voice, the fisherman was startled, and his whole body trembled.

—Yes, I am Hampik,—he said.

—Do you keep fish called *Levrek*? I will pay you whatever you want.

The fisherman stepped backward and scrutinized more closely his customer's face in the light of the flickering lamp. A bitter, tragic smile trembled on his lips.

—I have,—he said in a low voice. He picked a fish from a jug, put it on the fish basket, and pointing with his finger, he said:

—Here it is.

—How much?

—I'll tell you soon.

The fisherman loosened the front buttons of his shirt, stuck his hand inside, and brought out a small piece of paper. He stretched the piece of paper on the flat of the fish, and turning to Siranoush, asked:

—Do you recognize this?

\* Bass.



The young woman looked at the piece of ornate stationery which had turned yellow with age, and read:

"My worshipful Aram."

She shrank back, startled, and gasped:  
—Hampik!

—A kiss on your neck,—the fisherman replied, putting his hand on the fish, and leering at her lecherously.

For an instant their eyes were merged into one another. They said many things to each other without words, without sound.

Then Siranoush took off her shawl, bent her head forward, and like a lamb which is led to the slaughter, baring her neck, said to the fisherman:

—Here, kiss it.

For an instant Hampik watched the stricken creature which was bowed before him, there was a moisture in his eyes, he stepped backward, and in a voice of infinite sadness, said:

—I don't want it. Take your fish and go.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yervant Sermakeshkanlian, penname *Yeroukhan*, was among the leading exponents of the *realist school* of Western Armenian writing. His vibrant and living short stories deal almost exclusively with the basic goodness of the common man.

He was born July, 1870, in the Khashkiough section of Istanbul, later taught in that city, in Egypt and in the Balkans. At one time he served as editor of the Istanbul Armenian-language newspaper "*Arevelk*." During the Armenian deportations of 1915, Sermakeshkanlian was imprisoned by the Turks and killed near Kharpert (Harpoot) along with several other Armenian intellectuals.

# THE CASE OF THE DISILLUSIONED RETURNEES TO SOVIET ARMENIA

By A. SAHAKIAN

The case of disillusioned returnees fleeing from Armenia, - - a phenomenon which is common to the entire Soviet Union - - has left a profound impression on the Armenian communities of the Middle East. The veracity of these stories which have been seeping through is beyond question for two obvious reasons: first, the identity of the fugitives is no secret, they are all known in the Middle East; secondly, nearly all returnees who have fled from Armenia are known "Progressives", namely Armenian communists who for years praised the Soviet regime to the skies, and now, after seeing that regime, fled from that "paradise" at the risk of their lives.

Before entering into the testimonies of these fugitives, it is pertinent to answer one or two questions which inevitably harass many minds. The first, how can these men contrive to escape when the border is so closely guarded? It should be stated at once that luck does not smile on all. The number of the fugitives is many, but few succeed in crossing the border, and even this much is a matter of pure accident. Those who are caught in the act are shot on the spot or hustled off to Siberia. Nevertheless, many take the risk, if they see a chance in a million of escaping from the Soviet "paradise."

There is something which almost borders on the tragic when an Armenian is willing to surrender himself to the Turk after he has fled from his own fatherland. That

alone should suffice to prove the enormity of the Soviet regime. It should be enough to convince the greatest skeptic that the Soviet regime in reality is hell.

The second question is the logical sequel of the first. How come that the Turks not only do not kill those fugitive Armenians, but give them free passage through their country to cross the Syrian border? The obvious and superficial explanation is that the Turks, being naturally hostile to Armenian repatriation, permit the fugitives to cross the border so that they may discredit the repatriation movement with their gruesome tale.

I am of the opinion that this conclusion is not exactly based on the facts. The Turks know very well that the presence of large numbers of Armenians in the Middle East, close to their border, is no less desirable. They know well that many returnees to Armenia, sooner or later, will be scattered in the interior of Russia, a circumstance which will balance the scales as far as themselves are concerned, and will rob the repatriation of its importance. Conversely, it is patent that the appearance of fugitive Armenians in the Middle Eastern countries will lend strength to the anti-Bolshevik propaganda among the Arab masses of the East. Furthermore, while clinging to his criminal nature, the Turk is adept in the use of those external forms which are calculated to please and to hoodwink the gullible westerners. In this, the Turks are

fortified by the proven anti-Soviet sentiments of the western countries.

A third factor which affects the situation is the decision of all Arab countries never to take back fugitive Armenian repatriates; but despite this decision, Arab authorities continue to sidestep the law, and frequently give asylum to escapees. As in the case of the Turks, here too, the humanitarian factor is a necessary adjunct of political considerations. The fact is, all these causes combined, have enabled a rare few to escape the iron curtain and find shelter in friendly countries.

As stated above, most of these escapees are former "Progressives", namely communists or communist-sympathizers, rabid anti-Dashnags, who were known for their hatred of all those who opposed the Soviet regime. Now, what is the story of these eye-witnesses?

First of all, it should be observed that so great is the terror of these men, and so sharp are the marks of their sufferings of a few months in the Soviet fatherland, that it takes a good deal of persuasion to induce them to talk and to relate what they have seen. This is their story. The minute the returnees set foot in the port of Batoum, they instantly sense a different atmosphere and a sort of dead weight settles down in their souls. Few are those who are lucky enough to be sent to Armenia from Batoum at the first instant. The vast majority of them are forced to stay there under conditions which are intolerable.

The first concern of the repatriates of course is the recovery of such personal effects which they have brought along with them. It is no secret that, thanks to the friendly feelings of the so-called "imperialistic" governments, the Armenian repatriates have brought along their entire possessions. There are families who have brought along a score of trunks and suit cases loaded with food, clothing, and furni-

ture. These naturally must be claimed. But generally, not only such efforts are useless, but the incumbents cannot even reclaim most urgently-needed articles. At the last moment, the commissars will declare that everyone will receive his belongings when he arrives in Armenia. But once in Armenia, it is a dreadful thing to try to establish that the greater part of the repatriates have not received their belongings. In vain they try for months to register their claims, or make the necessary appeals, only to be told after long procrastinations that their effects have been stolen on the way. As to those rare few who are fortunate enough to reclaim their effects, these are subjected to long terms of systematic unemployment. There is an organized effort to reduce all new-comers who are well clad and well heeled to the status of the poverty-stricken natives in order to remove the shocking contrast between them and the natives.

The second problem is the housing shortage. This critical situation, disclosed by sporadic smuggled letters, is corroborated by the testimony of the escapees. According to them, several families are crowded into a single room, rooms which generally are devoid of elementary facilities of habitation.

This insufferable situation is further aggravated by the problem of the site of residence. No one is free to reside in a location of his choice; it is the government which decides the nature of work and the site of the residence. Families or compatriots who used to live close to each other before the repatriation are forced to separate. This policy of separation pursues definite aims, and consequently, no one dares advance any objection against it. Any discontent or manifestation of discontent is subject to dire punishment.

But the most difficult of all is the cost of living. The government hand-outs are not enough for a living; whereas necessities of

life are so scarce that they are difficult to obtain even if one had the money. People are forced to wait in line for long hours in order to receive a piece of black bread.

All escapees testify that there are plenty of goods in the black market, but the prices are so prohibitive that few is the number of those who can benefit from it. It has been computed that a worker's monthly wage would scarcely suffice for three days at black market prices. Under the circumstances, people resort to illegal means to insure a living. Thievery and hold-ups has

become a common thing, and in this way small children manage to earn ten times more by stealing and reselling, than the average worker can earn by his honest labor.

These and other causes known only to those who have lived under the Soviet regime, explain why many rabid communist repatriates, after having tasted of the Soviet "paradise", have attempted to flee from the fatherland at the risk of seeking refuge with the dread Turk, and at the risk of their very lives.

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## BEFORE I WAKE

By Diana Der Hovanessian

*Are we old? Or lived a long time past?  
And these are memories reviewed?  
So seems each time we meet, an interlude,  
Begged for and granted, but perhaps the last.  
And between us standing so silent  
Are shadows of Death and Time  
But you show neither awe nor surprise  
Ah, my love, so indifferent.  
Or perhaps it may be that I'm  
Over-morbid, and not over-wise,  
And beyond today you are blind . . .  
I cannot make you hurry or feel the same sad ache  
I cannot hold you close enough before I wake.*

# STEPAN MALKHASIANTZ

(1857-1947)

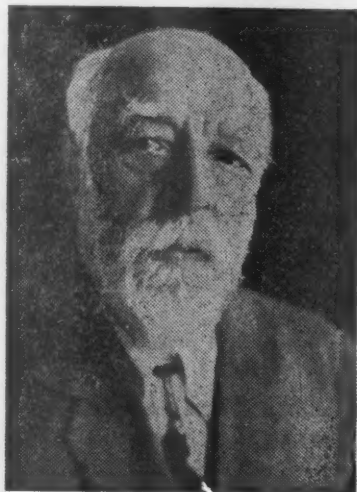
By DR. ARTASHES ABEGHIAN

Armenology, Armenian pedagogy and culture have sustained a severe and irreparable loss with the passing last year of Stepan Malkhasiantz, the great academician who for more than sixty years, with unusual devotion and ability, served the cause of Armenian science and education, leaving behind him a rich cultural inheritance for future generations.

Born on October 25, 1857, in the town of Akhalkzha, Malkhasiantz was the son of an emigrant Armenian worker from Karin (Erzerum), a tailor by trade. He received his elementary education at Karapetian School, one of the finest local schools of the time in Caucasus which boasted an unusually capable faculty including, if I am not mistaken, the well-known pedagogue and writer Lazarus Aghayan. After completing the Karapetian and Akhalkzha public schools in 1874, he entered the newly-opened Seminary of Eachmiadzin where he studied four years under such masters as K. Ayvazovsky, K. Kostanian, and others. And while, due to sickness, he was forced to leave the seminary before completing his course, soon after, in 1878, he was sent to St. Petersburg to take up his advanced education.

At first a certificate student in the Department of Orientology of Petersburg University, for reasons of his own, he left the institution three years later, but upon receiving his certificate from the Junior College in 1887, he reentered the university and was graduated in two years. Here, together with Nikolay Y. Marr, he was a pupil of the

famous orientologist and Armenologist Kerovpeh Patkanian, a graduate of Dorbat University, who was then the head of the Department of Orientology of Petersburg University. Nikolay Marr and Stepan Malkhasiantz were Patkanian's best pupils; and the former, after the death of his teacher in 1889, succeeded him as head of the department, while Malkhasiantz returned to the fatherland in 1890 and devoted himself to pedagogy and Armenology. By that time he had thoroughly mastered classical Armenian, bibliography, as well as the Georgian, Russian, and several oriental and European languages. After serving as



*Stepan Malkhasiantz*



superintendent of schools of his native Akhaltzkha, the next year (1891) he was invited to Tiflis as instructor of Armenian language and bibliography in Nercessian School.

Thereafter, for fully 20 years Malkhasiantz served at the Nercessian School, both as instructor and principal. He served in the same capacity in Tiflis girls' schools, Hovnanian (4 years), and Gayanian (2 years), with another year at the Gevorgian Academy of Etchmiadzin, and one year at the Junior College of Akhaltzkha.

In 1918, when the dream of generations—the Independent Republic of Armenia—was realized, Malkhasiantz, as a member of the Parliament, moved from Tiflis to Yerevan together with the others, where he became one of the leading figures of the Armenian Popular Party, especially in the fields of national culture in his capacity as a specialist in scientific questions. As a specialist, he served on the committee of the national flag, The Armenian Tricolor, which had been appointed by the Parliament. When in 1920 (January), under the leadership of the late Nigol Aghbalian, then Minister of Education, the University of Armenia was opened in Alexandropol (now Leninakan), Malkhasiantz was invited to serve on the faculty as a specialist in classical Armenian. Sometime later, he moved back to Tiflis where he lived a number of years, continuing his scientific labors. Finally recalled to Yerevan, he served as professor, became a member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences (1943), and continued his scientific work until his death in 1947.

As master of the Armenian language, in particular the ancient "Grabar" (classical), Malkhasiantz turned out hundreds of pupils who owe their knowledge of the mother tongue to him. During the four decades bridging the past and present centuries, in his association with the Nercessian School alone, he prepared a whole generation which was thoroughly imbued with the love of

the mother tongue. Hundreds of Armenian teachers now carrying on in all parts of the world, studied at his feet. Endowed with a phenomenal fund of knowledge and with unusual pedagogical ability, he was capable not only of imparting knowledge to his pupils, but of verily inspiring them with the love of their ancestral culture.

Aside from his scientific and pedagogical labors, Malkhasiantz also took an active part in Armenian public life. A close friend of Krikor Ardzrooni, the founder of the periodical "Mushak" of Tiflis, he collaborated with that paper from the time of its founding until much later, under the editorships of A. Calantar and H. Arakelian. He was one of the founders of the Armenian People's Party in 1917 in Tiflis, after the February Revolution in Russia, under the initiative of a devoted group centering around "Mushak."

#### *His Literary Activity*

In 1945, two years before his death, Malkhasiantz completed his sixtieth year of activity in Armenology. His first scientific work, the second scientific publication of the history of Stepanos Asoghik, was published in 1885 in Petersburg, when he still was a student at the University. His next work was "The Declension, Conjugation, and Prepositions of the Grabar" (classical Armenian), a text book designed for the needs of his pupils, which he completed in a short time during the first year of his association with the Nercessian School, 1891. This was followed by his "Euphony of the Grabar," published in 1892.

Conceived in a definite and logical sequence, these two works are highly valuable as text books of the Grabar, while the second work, in particular, is unique, in that the author has supported it with numerous examples from classical writers, with special emphasis on Yeznik Goghpatzi's "Yeghdz Aghantotz" which is written in the choicest language.

Thereafter, Malkhasiantz rose to fame through his philological works. The first of this series was a small but attractive research study entitled "A Study of Faustus of Byzant," dedicated to that classical author's history of the Armenians, published in Vienna. A similar work entitled "The History of Sebeos and Moses of Khoren" (a bibliographical study), was published by the Armenian Publishing Society of Tiflis during the Nineties. As a guide book for his pupils, during the same years Malkhasiantz outlined and later constantly revised a work entitled "Textbook of Armenian Bibliography"; but this work, being restricted to his students, as far as I know, was never published.

Besides these works and numerous philological studies published in periodicals, during the first period of his life extending to World War I, Malkhasiantz also published the Armenian translations of a number of European works, such as Shakespeare's "Macbeth" and "King Lear," and George Moritz Ebers' "I am a Man," through the Tiflis Publishing House.

His masterpiece of that period, an imperishable legacy was, however, the famous series entitled "History of the Armenians." This series, initiated by Malkhasiantz and financially supported by Siukias Archbishop Barzian of Etchmiadzin, aimed to publish the works of classical Armenian historians accompanied with historical criticisms. Unfortunately, this highly valuable venture was left half-completed as a result of adverse circumstances and especially the insurmountable hardships created by the war. Those published were only three volumes which again are enough to perpetuate the work of the initiators and the editors. These were: "Agatangelos" edited by Galoost Ter Mukuertichian and S. Kanayan (1909); "Lazar of Pharb" edited by the same Mukuertichian and Malkhasiantz (1904); and lastly, Moses of Khoren's "History of

the Armenians," edited by Manook Abeghian and Set Haroutounian (1913). Incidentally, it was during this period that Malkhasiantz initiated his revised orthography of the Armenian alphabet based on the principles of phonetics, entitled, "One Letter for Each Sound."

The second period of Stepan Malkhasiantz' literary and scientific activity commenced with the first years of the post-war era. I have already stated that he was one of the first professors in the newly-founded University of Armenia in 1920. Years later he again served in that capacity in Yerevan, was a charter member of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, and published a number of literary-philological works. Noteworthy among these is his research study entitled "Concerning the Riddle of Khorenatzi"—a controversial question in which he sided with those scholars who insisted that Khorenatzi lived and wrote his work during the Fifth Century, and NOT at a later period, as has been contended by another school, including the Mekhitarist scholars of Vienna.

In his last years, Malkhasiantz made a new translation of Khorenatzi's "History of the Armenians" from the classical Grabar into the modern dialect—an earlier and first translation, accompanied with profuse footnotes, having been executed by Khoren Vardabet Stepané (first edition 1889, second edition 1898). Malkhasiantz also translated into modern Armenian Faustus of Byzant's "History of the Armenians" and several other classics.

In his youth, Malkhasiantz also translated a work in Grabar entitled "The Forced Union of Polish Armenians with the Roman Church." He had a number of unpublished manuscripts on Armenian classical writings. A large number of his highly valuable critical studies, scattered in various periodicals, likewise are worthy of reassembly and publication in book form. In addition, Mal-

khiasiantz kept a diary from his early youth in which he recorded the noteworthy developments of the day.

*Malkhasiantz' Masterpiece—  
His Armenian Dictionary*

Nearly all of Stepan Malkhasiantz' literary and philological works are highly valuable. A few of them are lasting and imperishable for all time. But the work which has immortalized his name is his "Armenian Dictionary"—a work which is unique and unsurpassable in its field, and is the crowning achievement of his life.

I have known from intimate sources that our eminent Armenologist of the century, decades ago when he still was an instructor at the Nercessian School, started to collect material for this monumental project, which he considered his supreme mission in life. He collected his material and was ready to publish it should circumstances permit. And it is to the credit of Armenia's scientific

and publishing institutions, in particular the Ministry of Education, that they accurately perceived in time the value of Malkhasiantz' project and enabled him to consummate with success and honor his life's supreme achievement.

To this effect, in 1923, a contract was made between the Armenian Ministry of Education and Stepan Malkhasiantz, stipulating that the latter commence his labors with renewed zeal and expedite his work which was destined to be a landmark in the history of Armenian literature. After a labor of more than twenty years in which the greater share of his time and zeal was concentrated on this work, Malkhasiantz successfully completed it—The Armenian Expository Dictionary, consisting of four imposing volumes.

It pleased fate that, at the eve of his life, just before he closed his eyes forever, the indefatigable toiler had the supreme happiness of seeing the reward of his life, his printed work.



# THE KINGS OF ENGLAND AND MEDIEVAL ARMENIA

By NOUBAR MAXOUDIAN, L.L.B.

Relations between British and Armenian Kings flourished during the medieval period, when there existed an Armenian kingdom in Cilicia (1080-1375), which held sway over territories extending from the Taurus mountains to the Mediterranean.

It was the period covered by 1189-1393 A.D. that imparted a touch of romantic glamour to the relations between five English and seven Armenian Kings:

#### ENGLISH KINGS:

- 1) Richard I, "Coeur-de-Lion", 1189-1199.
- 2) Edward I, 1239-1307.
- 3) Edward II, 1284-1327.
- 4) Edward III, 1312-1377.
- 5) Richard II, 1367-1400.

#### ARMENIAN KINGS:

- 1) Levon II, 1186-1219.
- 2) Hetoum II (Heyton), 1289-1305.
- 3) Levon IV, 1305-1308.
- 4) Levon V, 1320-1342.
- 5) Guy, 1342-1344.
- 6) Constantine III, 1344-1363.
- 7) Levon VI Lusignan, 1374-1375.

Note: The Armenians had 4 kings bearing the name Constantine.

The years 1189-1199 marked the beginning of Anglo-Armenian relationship. Richard I of England, who figured prominently in the Third Crusade, occupied Cyprus in 1191, in which year he entered the Temple of Hymen. Levon II, King of Ar-

menia, attended the wedding ceremony as best man. This same Armenian king lent Richard I a helping hand in the siege of Acre against Salaheddin, Sultan of Egypt, who captured Jerusalem in 1187 A.D.

Armenians may rightly pride themselves on the unstinted assistance they gave to the Crusaders from the very beginning, i.e., from 1096 onward. An eloquent proof of their steadfast loyalty is found in the praise which Pope Gregory lavished on the first bearers of the Christian torch, by inserting the following in his Bulls: "... In olden times when the princes and armies of Christendom went to the conquest of the Holy Land, no nation and no people helped them with men, horses, provisions and counsel, with more readiness and zeal than the Armenians . . ." (See this Pope's Bull 'Ecclesia Romana, 1384).

Hetoum II, the Armenian King, (1289-1305), had his heart and soul in the cause of the Crusaders. This earned him the hatred of Melik Ashraf, Sultan of Egypt, who wrote to him a threatening letter in 1291, the year of the fall of Acre.

In his letter to King Edward I of England, (1239-1307), expressing his jubilation over the fall of Acre, the Armenian king did not fail to mention the threats hurled at him by the Egyptian Sultan. A year later Hetoum II wrote also to Pope Nicholas, acquainting him with the insolent treatment

meted out to him by Melik Ashraf. The Pope made it a point to keep the monarchs of England and France posted on what had passed between the Armenian and Egyptian rulers. In 1298 Hetoum's brother sent fresh letters to the Pope as well as to King Edward I of England bearing on the same matter, and received an answer from the latter in December of the same year.

During the reign of Levon IV an Armenian Delegation, consisting of three Armenian nobles, set off to see King Edward I. Unfortunately, however, the English King had already died when the Armenians set foot on British soil. The journey was undertaken at the instance of Hetoum II, who acted as sponsor to Levon IV, after having handed him his scepter.

King Edward II of England (1284-1327), who had succeeded King Edward I, wrote to the Armenian King in March of 1308, intimating his intention of dealing at an opportune moment with the subject raised by the Armenian embassy, whose members were granted both free passage and a gift of fifty pounds in cash.

In 1335 King Edward III, (1312-1377), also made a monetary present of forty pounds in silver to a certain George, who was likewise an Armenian envoy. In 1342, Edward wrote to King Levon V of Armenia, (1320-1342), holding out to him hopes of assistance by the Crusaders.

King Guy, (1342-1344), grandson of the deceased King Levon's aunt, Zabella, succeeded Levon V on the throne of Armenia. In 1343 the Armenian king delegated Constant to proceed to England. This emissary delivered into the hands of Edward III a letter from his sovereign together with an epistle bearing the signature of the Pope. King Edward wrote back to the King of Armenia in September of the same year. Four years later Pope Clement VI advised King Edward to bury the hatchet with France and devote his time and energy to the Armenian cause.

On ascending the Armenian throne in succession to King Guy in 1349, King Constantine III made it his first task to send a general to the kings of England and France, requesting them to hasten to his succor. That King Edward III of England was kindly disposed towards the Armenians is seen from the fact that he had generously allowed Armenian monks to travel about England and collect funds on behalf of Armenian churches. This was in 1360. Four years had elapsed when Nerses, the Armenian Bishop of the Convent of St. George situated in the Black Mountains of Cilicia, secured King Edward's permission to make a tour of pilgrimage in England accompanied by one of his monks. His stay in England lasted one year.

\* \* \*

We come to the last phase of Anglo-Armenian state relations during the reigns of King Richard II of England, (1367-1400), and King Levon VI of Armenia, (1374-1375). The latter was the only Armenian king to have the privilege of seeing England and to enjoy the honour of becoming the guest of an English monarch. Levon VI being the last king of Armenia, the events which occurred during his reign assume a special importance. It is, therefore, advisable that I should dwell on them at some length in so far as they bear on European history in general and affect English history in particular.

King Levon VI, the brother of Guy, was crowned king on the 14th of September 1374. The following year he had to take the field against the Mamelukes of Egypt. He was made a prisoner and taken to Cairo. He suffered the degradation of seven years' captivity. In 1382 he was released thanks to the intervention of Peter IV, king of Aragon, (1336-1387), and John I, King of Castille, (1377-1390).



Restored to freedom, the Armenian king undertook long journeys on the Continent. He visited Italy, Spain, and finally entered France on the 30th of June, 1384, and was received by Charles VI of France, (1380-1422), with the customary homage due a king. Suffice it to say that the Armenian king was allowed to live in a palace of St. Quen and become the recipient of an annual income of 6000 frcs. in gold. The French King's generosity exceeded the bounds of hospitality. King Levon or Leo, had earned his way into the sympathy and confidence of the French king, so much so that he frequently took part in the state councils held in Paris. The measure of his sagacity can be gauged by the strenuous efforts he put forth to reconcile England and France, which at the time were caught in the throes of the Hundred Years' War (1337-1453). He was so keenly bent on inducing the two great nations to accept peace that he offered to mediate. The soundness of the advice he tendered to the French king and his proposals in 1385 are in *Le Laboureur, Histoire De Charles VI*, 6th Book, Chapter A.

But the means of communication between England and France were scant in those days, owing to the tension in Anglo-French relations. The Armenian king took his plunge by boldly asking the English king to see him in person. Richard II readily granted his request, convinced as he was of his *bona fides*. He caused two permits to be issued, one for the Armenian King, and another for John de Rousp, who was his high "Seneschal" (See T. Rymer, *Foedera*, Vol. 3, Part III, pages 186-187).

The said two permits bear the dates of 24th and 28th October, 1385, respectively. Two passages culled from them, are given below for their historical interest:

"THE KING to all and each, admirals, etc."

"SALUTATIONS.

"BE IT KNOWN to you that when the il-

lustrious Prince Leo, King of the Armenians, reaches our British soil, in order that he may come and return in safety, through this letter we take under our protection the King with his subjects and servants . . . of every rank with forty horses and all their armour, all the time he is on our soil, on sea or on land, from the time he comes until he returns freely."

*The second Permit for the "Seneschal of Armenia" is thus worded:*

"THE KING to all and each, admirals, etc."

"SALUTATIONS.

"BE IT KNOWN to you that JOHN DE ROUSP, the high seneschal of the illustrious Prince Leo, King of Armenia, in company with five people, six horses, four archers, twenty-four bearded subjects with all their equipage . . . etc."

\* \* \*

King Levon VI arrived at Dover at the end of 1385. He was greeted by the Dukes of York and Lancaster. After seven days' stay there, he started off for London. Followed by his suite, the English king met him half way on the road. Rather touching was the scene when the procession came to a halt. The host embraced his guest. . . .

(See *Chronique du Religieux de Saint-Denys*. Vol. A, pages 421-423).

The English monarch vied with the French king in being hospitable to his Armenian guest. A palace was put at the latter's disposal for residential purposes. King Richard II and his statesmen met in Council at Westminster. King Leo urged upon them the need for reconciliation. He delivered a wise speech, stressing the fact that Christians in the West were bound in honour to lend a helping hand to the brethren in the East, and that they would be unable to accord such help, unless they sank their differences and marched hand in glove. The Armenian King's speech is published in (*Chronique*

*du Religieux de Saint Denys*, Vide Vol. IV, pages 423-427).

In a graceful response made to King Leo's appeal, Richard II intimated his willingness to cease hostilities immediately, if the terms laid down by his deceased father were adhered to.

On the 22nd of January, 1386, Richard II issued an edict, appointing a royal commission of six. These were to explore the possibilities of peace. Unfortunately for all concerned, the negotiations broke down. A vivid account of the episodes surrounding the desperate efforts at peace made by the last Armenian King is given in R. Holinshed's *Chronicles of England*, 2nd ed., Vol. II, page 446.

Holinshed and Rymer, both English authors, attest that *King Richard II allotted to the Armenian King an annual pension of £1,000, which was paid in two half-yearly installments, i.e. at Easter and at Michaelmas, in addition to many other magnificent presents.*

Let me quote a passage from Rymer in support of my statement.

**"FOR THE HONOUR OF GOD AND FOR THE HIGH POSITION OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCE AND OUR FELLOW-BROTHER LEON, KING OF THE ARMENIANS WHO IS ADORNED WITH THE ROYAL CROWN.**

"Considering that our Brother, with the toleration of the Supreme King, has been robbed of and driven from his kingdom, by the enemies of God, we desire to help him a little as becomes us. Therefore we have granted our brother £1,000 liras in our English money, which he will receive every year from our treasury, half at Easter and half at Michaelmas, until he be able to repossess his kingdom with the help of God."

Another gracious gesture on the part of

the English sovereign was that he allowed King Leo to stay in England until Christmas, providing him with a "Safe Conduct to France with 140 horses."

In May 1386, King Leo returned to France and acquainted Charles VI with the result of his mission. It was agreed that the English and French rulers should meet in France and thresh out the matter in person. But the projected royal meeting did not materialize. English and French representatives came together. Once more their deliberations ended in stalemate. (See Holinshed and *Chronique de Religieux de Saint Denys*).

Desirous of trying his hand once more, the Armenian king proceeded to England. The second permit issued by order of King Richard II runs as follows:-

".....Our beloved fellow-brother Leo, King of the Armenians, to come to England with a retinue of sixty, their horses and equipages, and to remain in England for a year, or to pass on to other countries."

• • •

The said permit bears the date of 11th December, 1392. King Leo died in Paris on the 29th November 1393, which proves that the Armenian king's sojourn in England must have been a short one.

During his last days spent in Paris, King Leo is said to have lost some of the jewels which he had received from the hand of Richard II. This constitutes an indirect proof of the English monarch's munificence to the Armenian king. (See Jorga's "*Philippe de Mesieres*", page 464.)

Leo VI was 51 years old when he died in Paris at the palace of "TOURNELLES". The funeral ceremonies were performed in accordance with the customs governing the burial of Armenian kings, which means that his mourners were all dressed in white. His gentle disposition and piety had won him many friends, which accounts for the great number of attendants at his funeral. (See

Juvenal des Ursin's, "*Histoire de Charles VI*").

In his will, Leo VI appeals to King Richard II (as well as all his kith and kin in Europe) to assist his executors and administrators in the proper and integral execution of the clauses of his last will and testament.

King Leo VI was buried in the Church of Saint Denys. During the welter of the French Revolution in 1789, the costly ornaments of his tomb were filched. His desecrated tomb is still at the Abbey of Saint Denys, which suburb is prized by Parisians as a holy quarter, being situated by the side of the historic "Mont-de-Mars". Here it was that Saint Dionysius was massacred with his two companions in 272 A.D., which is responsible for the erection of a beautiful abbey there.

Tradition will have it that the consecration of the church was made by Jesus Christ himself. He had alighted from heaven to bless the church of his three martyrs. One of its corners is believed by pious Frenchmen to have been the spot where Christ stood. This is where the tomb of the Armenian King lies. (See Guilhermy's "*L'Abbaye de Saint Denys et ses Tombeaux*", pages 2 and 58.).

What is now left of the remains of Leo VI is his effigy and the inscriptions. The bones of the Armenian King along with those of other notables were removed to the subterranean cemeteries known as "Les Catacombs de Paris".

The various donations Leo had received from different princes of Eurpoe had made him wealthier than when he sat on the throne of Armenia. To this view subscribe such well-known historians as Walshingham, Evesham, and Buchon.

On this tombstone the last Armenian king is inscribed as "Leo V". This error is traceable to the fact that of the six Leos who ruled over Armenia, five only wore the crown. I prefer mathematical exactitude to theoretical distinctions. This is why I class the last Armenian king as Leo VI, whose tombstone carries the following inscription in French:

"Cy Gist Tres Noble Et Excellent Prince  
"Lyon De Lusigne, Quint, Roi Latin Du  
"Royaume D'Armenie, Qui Rendit L'Ame  
"A Dieu A Paris Le XXIX Jour De Novembre, L'An De Grace MCCC XX Et  
"XIII.

"Priez Pour Lui."



# THE DEFENSE OF VAN

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## (Part IV)

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By ONNIG MEKHITARIAN

(Translated by Hrayr Baghdoian)

### April 13, 14 and 15

The battle progressed. Liquid-fire was in constant use, and our soldiery heaped one success upon the other.

The Topal Mollah's house which stood opposite Tutunjian's position was one of the strongest Turkish posts. On the night of the 13th, our soldiers and sappers drove a tunnel under it. At the same time, the Turks were digging a tunnel in the opposite direction in order to set Tutunjian's block-house on fire. Both parties were unaware of the other's operation; but when our tunnels suddenly met, one of our soldiers, more quick witted than anyone else present at the place, at once hurled a hand grenade which killed a Turkish sapper, and several soldiers. The other Turks lost courage and fled. Taken by surprise, the entire garrison deserted the Mollah's house which incidentally, was already burning away. Our soldiers rushed in, captured several abandoned rifles and other equipment and again withdrew to their own position.

The same night, Varjabed Tigran and our soldiers attempted to set fire to the Turkish police station on Arark Square which frequently presented difficulties to our positions. Tigran had been found worthy of a Cross of Honor by the Military Council,

and had been called "the intrepid incendiary" by the Intelligence Bureau. Though under a veritable shower of bullets, he had succeeded in approaching the Turkish shops that stood next to the police station. He had then spread kerosene all over the fronts of the stores, ignited it, and had retreated unharmed. The shops which were used as positions by the Turks began to burn fiercely. But a sudden downpour that night, and the efforts of the Turkish soldiers, saved the police station.

"The intrepid incendiary," however, was unable to reconcile himself with the partial success of his last endeavor. He wanted to set afire at any price the fortress that symbolized the Turkish oppression. Two days later, he succeeded in destroying the police station.

Writing in the Tiflis Weekly "Vandosb," April 28, 1916, Nos. 22 and 23, Haig Ajemian gives the following graphic account of this daring exploit:

"It was a dark, gloomy, and awesome night. A drizzling rain fell from the black skies. The enemy was maintaining a vigorous rifle fire.

"The military headquarters of Arark (Sector A), — a separate arrangement justified by the distance and the size of the

location—was determined to burn the police station at any price, because it was one of the most important of the enemy's positions and needed to be watched by about ten of our positions.

"From the police station the enemy began to fire vigorously on our positions with its new Mauser rifles.

"Chan! Chan! Fire Away. This is the last night you will fire! I'll silence you soon!" Tigran shouted happily.

"What's the matter, Varjabed?" I asked him. "Do you intend to burn the stations like you did the other positions?"

"Yes, V'Allah! I do intend to do just that. I am going to start off in that direction this minute."

"We all knew his boldness and were not at all surprised. He quickly poured the kerosene on easily inflammable stems of hemp and in a second darted outside. He intended to approach the police station through the shops he had burnt on the night of the 13th. There was danger of the parish dogs in the square aborting the plan by barking if they heard the least sound or sensed a careless movement. They began to bark suddenly with a tremendous din. From their nearby positions, the Turks opened a furious fusillade to which our men replied with a slow, calculated pistol fire.

"Our boys became worried. What had happened? Was it possible that Varjabed had been shot? Was he hiding in some place, and would eventually return? Twenty minutes passed, and we learned nothing. The rain was yet falling, but the firing had ceased.

"We were all waiting silently, with palpitating hearts. Suddenly, flames arose from the shops beneath the police station. They gradually revived, flared, and began to spread.

"Chan Varjabed! Long live Tigran!" The happy shouts arose from our boys as

they began to fire vigorously on the burning building.

"From our position in the church and the school of Arark, the Turks also opened fire on their own police station in order to kill the incendiary. The shooting continued with the same hellish racket from both sides. Meanwhile, the fire was working its destruction. The enemy, seeing that it was no longer possible to hold out, left the burning building and ran. The reserve ammunition which they abandoned by cases exploded in flames and made a deafening racket. The scene was terrible. The encouragement and rejoicing of our soldiers was great.

"Varjabed has been lost! Poor Varjabed!" all of us thought. Anxious questions began to torture our minds again.

"Suddenly Varjabed appeared, wet and breathless, but happy. Everyone embraced and kissed him, and drums and rejoicing saluted his success. Across no man's land, the Turks continued to fire while their police station burned.

"So the night passed. At dawn, smoke was yet rising from the ruins. Tigran Varjabed was the hero of the day. The Military Council decorated him with a Cross of Honor, while the daily news bulletins called him 'the intrepid incendiary.' "

• • •

On the 15th, after some extremely hard work, our soldiers succeeded in setting fire to Bolgeh Ahmad, an important Turkish position in Shan ward. In a desperate frenzy, the Turks abandoned their dead and wounded, and deserted their position. The destruction of the latter assured the safety of a number of our positions and streets in Shan ward. The Turks were forced to withdraw to a more distant position.

On the same day Khul's house on Khach street was also set on fire. In addition, the Turks were obliged to leave their important post at Sarachian's which our forces immed-



ately occupied. One of our incendiaries was killed and a soldier was wounded during the fights for the possession of these two positions.

Particularly severe fighting occurred about the positions at Poss Ward, Shimavonian's, Khach Street, the Hotel, and Nalbandian's. The Turks suffered considerable losses.

We also lost two engineers and a combatant. A rich, native goldsmith who was working as an engineer, was also wounded. An eleven year old girl who carelessly came out in front of the Persian Consulate was immediately killed by a Turkish bullet. The Turks also shot an aged woman who, under a white flag, was carrying letters from the Italian consul Sbordoni, and others, to Governor Jevdet. This occurred while she was walking through a trench which led from Nalbandian's position to the Hotel.

The Turks had serious losses particularly during the fighting on the Hainguz Sector. On the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month, they continued to bombard our strongest positions, those at Sahag Bey's and Tovmasian's, with their usual intensity. During the bombardment, they lost two gunners, an officer, and several militiamen.

• • •

On the 16th, the battle was ten days old. The Military Council sent the following proclamation to our soldiery on the occasion:

"The struggle which we have been waging for ten days against the ignoble enemy is the most splendid and most consecrated resistance in the history of our national liberation. The enemy, insidious and treacherous, murderous and barbarous, blood-thirsty and savage, wishes to put an end to our existence as a nation and as individuals. But we willed to fight for our lives, for our possessions, for our Faith, for our Honor, and for the existence of our entire race.

"We are waging this battle against the murderous government of six hundred years'

duration. We are waging it against criminals like Jevdet who is opposed to all the rights of humanity and civilization and who, thirsting for Armenian blood, preached a holy war against foreign enemies but who began to massacre all the Christians—women and children, the able-bodied and the feeble.

"Armenians of Vasbouragan:

"For ten days we have been exerting ourselves to the utmost. The battle we are waging shall also win the admiration of civilized mankind in these days of world-wide conflict.

"Let the entire world see how a handful of fighters—the greatest heroes of the Armenian nation — are fighting with unexampled joy in the name of Justice.

"May the God of Revenge soar over the heads of our soldiers and may the gallant spirits of heroism in all of us make itself heard.

"We have finished ten days. Let us prepare for new victories and new battles.

Military Council"

Van, April 15, 1915.

• • •

### Constructive and Communal Endeavors

From the very first day of the battle, the lack of ammunition seriously worried everyone from the Military Council to the last private. The Council's first command "spare the ammunition," proved the supreme necessity of economy. The soldiers, entirely aware of the seriousness and urgency of the command, really did spare their ammunition. Nearly every soldier took as great care of each cartridge as he did of his own person.

At times, however, this economy of ammunition was carried to excess. This was especially true when the Turks made their fierce attacks, when sparing ammunition might mean certain death. At all times, our soldiers were taunted by the enemy for what

seemed a reluctance to retaliate, but they answered his insults with a rain of stones.

But, in the long run, nursing our ammunition was but a futile compromise. The siege, and the stubborn daily attacks were forcing us to blow away our ammunition.

The natives of Van, however, were as skilled at improvisation as they were quick to learn the art of war. During the first week, work shops were established to manufacture powder (first black and later cordite) and to load cartridges.

The most skillful and experienced goldsmiths, engravers, gilders, mechanics, and other artisans, as well as many intellectuals, undertook that vital task. The dean of the normal school of Van, Professor Michael Minasian, and his colleagues, Vartan Babiagian and Haroutune Gakavian, obtained especially brilliant results in the powder factory. They themselves prepared the basic compounds, or secured them from the pharmacies. The black powder was made by a group of master goldsmiths of all classes and political affiliations. More than fifty artisans worked in all the powder workshops at feverish speed and with fastidious care.

The empty brass was returned every night to Headquarters who then sent the stuff to the work shop. The following morning, loaded cartridges were returned to Headquarters for distribution among the soldiers at the various posts. The factories were divided into departments under the supervision of these expert inspectors: Goldsmiths Vosdanig, Arshag, Avedis, and Karekin Shahbaghlian. Other artisans, noted or unknown, turned night into day in producing necessary ammunition. The powder was prepared in one place; the bullets were cast into molds in another; and in a third, the brasses were loaded. This went on endlessly, as long as nitrate, lead and nickel remained.

At a mean estimate, two thousand cartridges were often loaded daily, not an insignificant thing for a cartridge-hungry Military Council, and for the eighty odd positions which faced the Turkish offensive.

Nearly every family in Aikestan took part in the munitions making. Lead and nickel were especially needed. Almost every home voluntarily donated its samovar, dishes, and pewter ware to further the "sacred task." The efforts of the children in this respect were especially touching. Braving death, they went out between the trenches to collect bullets fired by the Turks. They filled their pockets with their harvest and brought the pellets to the Military Council.

Nitrates, which were positively necessary in the preparation of powder, were lacking most of all. Everyone's attention turned to the dark cellars and dung heaps of Aikestan. Attempts were made to scout around Varak where there should have been a great deal of the material.

Accidents also occurred. On the 17th, more than three and a half kilograms of powder exploded as result of a slight carelessness, but fortunately without harming anyone. It was worth seeing everyone from the inspectors of the factories to the members of the Staff crying over burnt powder! Several weapons also burst because of faulty powder.

A separate armory was also established to repair, remodel, and clean broken and damaged firearms.

\* \* \*

The cannon that Krikor Bulgarian fashioned was the most interesting of all our experiments in arms manufacture. He devoted all his spare time to his unique and now historic cannon. His attempts were repeatedly unsuccessful. The cannon always had some defect, but Krikor, an invincible and persistent man, did not know how to be dis-

couraged. Finally, he perfected his cannon which was named after him by the populace.

The piece looked comical. It had a small bore, took shells of almost a kilogram in weight, and was mounted on a two-wheeled carriage almost as small as itself. But that little cannon seemed to be the symbol of the Defense of Van: created under trying circumstances, possessing a firm and undefeatable will, a child of many sleepless nights, it opposed the preponderant forces and the ferocious cannon of the Turks.

Krikor's cannon was finished only in time to use during the final days of the battle. It was fired from the ground in front of Der Khachadrian's position in the plain during its first test. It had a good range, and fired and sounded like the real thing. That day was a semi-holiday for the people of Van! The piece was later brought to the field of battle. Several shells fired in the direction of Toprak Kaleh struck terror into the Turks who thought that Russian troops and cannon had reached Van.

After the siege had been lifted, when the Armenian volunteers of the Russian army were entering Van, "Krikor's Cannon" went with Aram and all the soldiers, as well as all the people, to welcome the volunteers. The curious piece spoke three times in welcome on the occasion.

Several factories had been started to make the light shoes (sols), which are famed throughout the east, for the fighting men. About thirty expert shoemakers worked in these shops which were supplied leather and other necessary materials by the Ordnance Council. These factories turned out on an average of forty to fifty shoes a day; and these shoes were distributed by the Ordnance Council to mature soldiers on the recommendation of their officers.

The Military Council was fully occupied with cares of its own. On the 18th of the month, a Police Department was organized to keep order among the thousands of refu-

gees who had crowded into the city. The following order of the Military Council to the new Police Department shows the intent and necessity of its organization, and well defines its powers and duties:

"To the Police Department of the National Defense:

"Gentlemen:

"Under the present circumstances it is imperative for us to have harmony among the people in the city. This can be assured by precluding and preventing all kinds of misdemeanors.

"It is plain that in the present congestion, the slightest hygienic negligence must be regarded as a misdemeanor because it can endanger the lives of the people. From the aforementioned viewpoint, the other misdemeanors plainly become crimes deserving the severest punishment.

"That is why the Military Council accepts the imperativeness of the organization of the Police Department. That organization is to take serious, speedy, and strict measures against the following misdemeanors, and of course, to surrender the guilty and to send its reports to the Courts Martial:

"A—To forbid congregating of people in the streets in order to reduce the hazard from shells.

"B—To try and punish those who spread false news, either of good or bad import.

"C—To conduct trials anent the remaining misdemeanors and to render decisions, but to surrender those found guilty to the higher Courts Martial.

"D—To undertake measures and, if necessary, to mete out penalties to insure the harmony of families dwelling under the same roof. To look after the safety of empty houses.

"E—To punish those who profiteer from public rations, clothing, etc., or who misappropriate them, and to transmit the facts to

the Committee to which they belong.  
Military Council"

April 18, 1915.

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The Police Department had its own office in Guloghlian's house, in Norashen. Krikor Jonian, who had been a Turkish police commissioner of a ward, was made chief of police. Jonian had fifty policemen in his department, most of whom were well-mannered youths. These policemen wore red insignia on their arms and carried short, smooth clubs. They had their own corporals.

The people behaved with proper respect toward the policemen and followed all their requests and orders. No crime was committed during the entire battle aside from several trivial incidents.

A jail had also been given to the police force. During its period of keeping order, watching over sanitation, etc., the Police Department kept itself subject to the Military Council and also in contact and cooperation with the Ordnance Council, the Court, the Mayoralty, and similar bodies.

A court was organized at the same time. To it the people referred all kinds of disputes—litigations, quarrels, demands for payments on money due—which had come up in the past or might appear in the future.

The directory of the Court consisted of Hovhanes Migirdichian-Guloghlian (teacher), Hrand Kaligian (lawyer), and Ruben Shadvorian (Ottoman court official). The court clerk was Arsen Hatzakordzian, the circuit principal of the Prelacy schools. The court likewise has its own building—Shirvanian's house in Norashen.

A mayoralty much like that in effect under the Turks was also formed. Its duties were to supervise sanitary conditions, business relations, assessments, the succor of families who had been living in the city before the troubles arose and who were now

economically embarrassed, and similar community responsibilities. Its was subject to the Military Council; and, at the same time, cooperated with other councils. Bedros Mozian was designated mayor, and his assistants were Khachig Zenobian and Ghevont Khanchian, both non-partisans.

The women of Aikestan also aided greatly the defense through the Union of Armenian Women of Vasbouragan which had been organized by Aram and Mihran Terlemezian,\* in the first days of the constitutional regime. At the beginning of the battle, the Women's Union clearly saw its duty and got to work. At the very first opportunity, it opened a sewing factory where the girls made shirts, socks, leggings, and similar clothing for their fighting brethren. They themselves procured most of the material for the factory, brought it from their own houses, secured it through donations, or brought it with the Unions funds. The Ordnance Council also helped. The Union's workshops supplied the numerous needs of the military and refugees' hospitals.

A separate committee of the Women's Union went from ward to ward and from house to house collecting necessary materials and gifts for the warriors. Another committee distributed the gifts at the battlelines. Others visited the trenches to encourage the soldiers by speaking with them. Some of the members of the Union had already become sisters of mercy and were present day and night in the hospitals.

There was also an exception.

A seventeen-year-old girl named Sevo who had been a simple beggar in her childhood days, did not take part in the work of the Women's Union during the entire siege. She

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\*Mihran Terlemezian was the flower of Van's intellectuals, a brilliant field worker of his political party. As a deputy to the General Assembly of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation at Garin, he was not present in Van. He was killed at Garin.

had her own work. Carrying a pistol, her black tresses flying, wholly fire and flame, she sped from position to position, sometimes as a runner, sometimes as a spy, occasionally as an inspiring spirit, at times as an amazon, standing guard while exposing herself to the enemy's sharpnel and bullets.

The work of the Women's Union was directed by Mesdames Chirpashkian and Anna Terlemezian, as well as the Misses Zaruhi Shaljian, Hripsime Nalbandian, Araxi Safrasdian, and others.

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### The Battles in the Surrounding Localities

Fighting had broken out in the nearby Armenian villages of Shahbaghi on the 7th of the month. In accordance with Jevdet's commands, the Turkish village head had attempted to round up the able bodied men and to disarm them in order to be able to destroy the peasantry the more easily. The Turkish guards chased an Armenian youth and began to fire on him. This revealed the intended treachery and our peasants replied in kind. The battles lasted nearly all day, with the Armenians suffering not a single important loss. Six policemen were killed; two others were disarmed and later released. Feeling themselves too weak numerically to undergo a prolonged defense, the peasants decided to move en masse to beleagured Aikestan.

Led by several squads of armed young men, they marched to Averag, a nearby Armenian village. Taking part of the inhabitants of that village with them, they marched on the night of the 10th over the trail to Sighka and Shushantz villages, and finally reached Aikestan unharmed and without serious incident.

Ten thousand peasants from Shahbaghi and Averag who were lodged in the homes of the hospitable people of Aikestan, shared

the latter's tribulations and their bread, and took part in the defense of the city. By command of the Military Council, the armed and able bodied men of Shahbaghi were assigned to various positions.

On the 12th, more than ten thousand people—the entire Armenian population of the villages from the Arjag-Kharragonis-Mantan region to Van—crowded into Aikestan. Shirin Hagopian, the Dashnag field worker of the Arjag-Kharragonis region, was the sole leader of the new Anabasis.

The battles began in earnest on the 7th of April, and, as always, on Jevdet's command and in accordance with his previously laid plans. Shirin himself depicts in plain language the beginning of the battles in an article which appeared in "Work" (No. 24, 1916):

"On the 3rd, my Kurdish runner, Nuro, revealed to me that the government was making plans to massacre the Armenians. Mayor Chia Bey of Pergri had summoned to him all the 'mukhtars' and had announced that if anyone aided an Armenian or kept him in his house, he would be punished severely and his house would be burned. The following plans had been made:

"Jevdet Bey was to take care of Van. Mayor Chia Bey of Pergri and the horsemen of Farho and of Amar Bey, the grandson of Gop-Mahmud, were to attend to Pergri and Upper Timar. The troops of Kaimakam Sharaf Bey of Sarah, and of Arif Bey, and the tribesmen of Tagur were to clean up Arjag and lower Timar. Shakir's son, Lezgi, and his horsemen, were to handle Haiotz-Tzor. The tribesmen of Hosssein Pasha's son were to take Arjesh-Alchavan.

"They had all been ordered to massacre all the Armenians in their sectors IN A SINGLE DAY. After that had been done, they



would turn to the immolation of the Armenian population of Nortugh, Shadakh, and Kavash cantons.

"One hundred and fifty Armenian soldiers who had been serving faithfully in the Ottoman army were killed in Sarah at this time. Dr. Karagoezian also suffered the same fate. Until that incident, the Kaimakam of Sarah had been accustomed to killing or to spiriting away one or more foremost Armenians. This had been a daily practice. For example dentist Aristakes of Moush had been taken care of in this manner.

"On the 5th, several gendarmes attempted to deceive me and to lead me away to Arjag. But having heard of Vramian's arrest and Ishkhan's murder, I refused to go along with them.

"On the 6th, five hundred horse and a thousand foot-soldiers and Kurds began to kill all the Armenians whom they found in the streets. Arjag resorted to self-defense, and the regular battle began on the 7th. On that day, Sahag of Mantan, an old time Dashnag warrior, was killed. His death was a serious blow to the defenders."

Fathers Martiros and Sahag of Kharra-gonis, eyewitnesses and participants, have given in "Work" a detailed account of the heroic battle that lasted for five days, and of the dogged retreat:

"In April, we villagers were light-heartedly thinking about the spring labors. Shirin Hagopian unexpectedly showed up at our village on the 5th. He was a native of our village and the Dashnag field-worker of our region. He would ordinarily have been absent on communal or government work; but he commenced to rally those who had arms and organized them into seven squads.

"He dispatched at the same time runners bearing letters to all the Dashnag sub-committees of Timar, Arjag, and the other regions, informing them of the prevalence of rumors of a massacre and bidding them to

stand ready so as not to be taken by surprise. Mr. Hagopian ordered the people of Arjag and Mantan to come to Kharra-gonis under cover of darkness that same night. We thus had a population of more than two thousand five hundred: thirteen hundred natives, seven hundred people from Arjag, one hundred and fifty from Mantan, and about four hundred more from Azar and Baghazkes villages who had taken shelter in the place since last autumn.

"The armed young men of Arjag and Mantan joined our squads, so that we had eighty soldiers altogether. Mr. Hagopian assumed the leadership of these men, grouped them into sections, showed them their positions, detailed their duties, and exhorted them to perform their patriotic duty and to put up a strong and fearless defense.

"Toward nightfall of the 6th, a band of Kurds, bent on pillage and massacre, tried to enter the village. Several of them were killed and the others were driven away.

"At dawn on the next day, we were besieged by about five hundred horsemen and a thousand regular soldiers and tribesmen. They were led by the Kaimakam of Sarah, Sharaf Bey of Khanasor, Arif Bey of Shavi, and army officers. They had a cannon with them and immediately began to bombard the village with explosive shells.

"They also began to attack the village from all sides, and a tense and unequal combat ensued. But the courage of the heroes of the three villages prevailed, and the enemy was driven back. Our corporals were Sahag of Mantan, Samson of Kharra-gonis, Hagop, Megerditch, Melkon, Anoushavan, David, Alexan of Arjag, and Setrag. Sahag of Mantan was killed at noon while making a spirited attack from his position. His brother Toros immediately took his place. The morale of our fighters remained high all through the combat. The enemy retreated leaving their dead behind. Ruben, another of Mr.

Hagopian's brothers, and two comrades, were going about over dangerous paths encouraging the sections that were hard pressed, to communicate to them new orders. The battle lasted until nightfall at which time the enemy had suffered sixty-seven dead. We were fully besieged; and even worse, each man had about fifty-five cartridges left for his personal use.

"Because of these circumstances, we determined to evacuate the town and to retreat with all people to the Kizikchai Mountains. Mr. Hagopian first of all dispatched eight armed and ten unarmed natives to carry the news of the battle to Persia, and to ask for aid. Samson's squad then went ahead as a vanguard, and flank and rear guards were selected. All the people were ordered to follow the squads of armed men. Meanwhile, Shirin Hagopian and a squad of horsemen rode out to scout the outer environs of the village so as to put up a show of a fight and to cover the retreat if the enemy were near. Since this detachment did not encounter the enemy, it hurried to occupy strategic positions along the route.

"At dawn the village had been evacuated with the exception of about two hundred of the sick and aged who were unable to march. Among those remaining were Mr. Hagopian's wife and their four children with whom she could not suffer to part. When the dawn came, the enemy again besieged Kharragonis; only when it was too late to save them did Mr. Hagopian learn that his wife and children had been left in the village.

"The retreating people soon flocked into Kizilchai village where a commissariat committee was appointed to set up a ration system for the new comers. Mr. Hagopian, meanwhile, wrote to the Dashnag sub-committee of Upper and Lower Timar urging those groups to rally the people there to resistance if such was possible, or else to call

for a retreat to the deserted islands of Lim and Gidutz in Lake Van. That day we took up our positions upon the mountain. The Armenians of adjacent towns gathered into the villages nestling around the base of the mountain. Ruben and several horsemen made an unsuccessful attempt to extricate Shirin's family from the lately evacuated town. We later learned the enemy had killed the sick woman and the children upon learning their identity.

"On the 9th, about three or four thousand horsemen tried to ascend the mountain from the direction of Yalduzaghaj village. Meeting resistance at the hands of our guards, they withdrew, leaving seven dead.

"On the 10th, the enemy again made a strong attack. Three hundred horsemen from Yalduzaghaj and thousands of infantry, supported by cannon, attempted to ascend the mountain from the direction of Nepath village. Our fighters, however, coolly drove them off; and the battle continued until nightfall. Mino of Nepath, a Dashnag and a brave fighter was killed. Nearly one hundred Armenian soldiers from Kizilchai, Nepath, Mkhginer, Ardaviz, Kababig, Sethirig, Aghacha Veran, participated in these battles.

"By this time, many of our men had spent their cartridges and were extremely discouraged. That night the people and the fighters repaired to Averag village and sent word to the surrounding Armenian villages to rally around them. Before day-break, no less than ten thousand people from thirty-two villages had poured into Averag, Mr. Hagopian occupied himself with recruiting new soldiers from among them, and with settling the unarmed people in suitable places.

"Before the sun had risen, the enemy began a strong attack on our positions from all sides. This time two cannons roared and shells hailed on the village and the defense-

less people. The soldiers continued to fight because of the encouragement accorded them by Shirin; but the terror-stricken people, fearing that the enemy would be among them at any moment, began to flee the village, and it was only through the use of force that Shirin succeeded in bringing them back to the village and sanity. Meanwhile, our soldiers, who had thrown a cordon around the mountain, had been unable to resist the fierce attack of the enemy, and had retreated towards Kizilcha. Shirin's three brothers, Aram, Manaseh, and Krikor, were among those killed on the mountain. In spite of this misfortune, Shirin did not lose his nerve, and continued to direct the battle. Misak of Ardavez, Ruben of Goje, and several companions fought on the western side of the mountain; Mihran of Giusn and three comrades held the eastern side; Shirin and his three brothers, Hrand and Ruben, held the northern side; and Martiros of Goje fought against the enemy on the south.

"The last group silenced the enemy's cannon for awhile by killing the gunner. That

band then went to aid the isolated people to encourage them on, then threw itself on the enemy to kill several and to put the rest to flight, then defended itself fiercely against the enemy regardless of the fact that the burning barns around the village had enveloped everything in smoke.

"In the afternoon, Shirin's brother, Ruben, suffered a severe chest wound and was obliged to give up his rifle to his comrades. In addition, Shirin's other brother, Hrand, was wounded by a burst of shrapnel which killed Shirin's nephew. But without losing his head, he fought right and left against the enemy and did not allow them to enter the village until dark.

"As soon as darkness fell, Shirin sent several soldiers ahead to act as guides and as van-guards, and all the the oxen were distributed among the people. He then conducted more than nine thousand peasants safely over the Shahbaghi Mountains, along and by Sighka Lake and village, and then into Aikestan itself."

*(To be continued)*



## CLASSIC BOOKS IN SERIAL FORM

## SAMUEL

A Historical Novel  
of Armenia 366-400 A. D.

By Raffi

Translated from the Armenian

## BOOK ONE

## Chapter XI

## The Step Mother



## A SUMMARY OF WHAT HAS PRECEDED

The story begins in the middle of the fifth century B.C. Arshak (Arsaces), king of the Armenians who had launched a policy of centralization by restraining his recalcitrant and powerful princes, has been treacherously inveigled by King Sapor of Persia into his court in Ctesiphon where he is confined in jail. His faithful commander-in-chief, Prince Vasak Mamikonian has been slain by King Sapor, and his body, stuffed with straw, has been hanged in sight of King Arshak, in order to complete his humiliation and torture. King Sapor is making a strong bid for the domination of Armenia which is divided between the two powerful influences of Byzantine west and Eastern Persia. In this conspiracy, two powerful Armenian princes, Vahan Mamikonian and Meroujan Artzrouni have sided with Sapor in return for promises of commander-in-chief for the former, and the kingship of Armenia for the latter. Two messengers have brought news of Ctesiphon, one to Lady Tajatouhi, wife of Vahan, and the other to Samuel, Vahan's son who is scandalized and shocked at his father's and mother's treachery to the fatherland. Samuel, Sahak Parthev, son of the Armenian High Priest, Mesrop Mashtots, the future inventor of the Armenian alphabet, and Prince Mushegh, son of Vasak, hold a secret conference, surveying the crisis which threatens Armenia, while Lady Mamikonian is feverishly busy making preparations for the triumphant entry of her husband, and her brother Meroujan into Armenia to supplant Christianity by Persian sun worship, and Armenia's independence by Persia's rule.

The next day there was unusual jubilation in the Fortress of Voghakan. The servants were dressed in their best, the concubines verily sparkled in their colorful jewelry, and even the eunuch Bakos had put on his bespeckled belt. The whole fortress was awaiting the arrival of a distinguished guest, Sahak Parthev.

Sahak Parthev was no stranger to that house. The Mamikonians were his cousins. His father, Nerses the Great, was a son-in-law of the Mamikonians. His mother, Lady Sandoukht, was the daughter of Vardan, Samuel's uncle. In his student days, Nerses together with his wife Sandoukht lived in Caesarea where Sahak was born. Three

years later Sandoukht died in the same city and her father, Vardan, brought her body to Armenia and buried it in the patriarchal family cemetery in the town of Til. After the loss of his beloved spouse, Nerses the Great did not remain long in Caesarea, and went to Constantinople to complete his education. There he married Aspion, the daughter of a Greek nobleman.

Having returned early in the morning from the Monastery of Ashtishat, Samuel immediately informed his mother of Sahak's impending visit, and while the news at first disturbed her, that woman concealed her displeasure and promptly ordered the necessary preparations for Sahak's reception. She had been rather impatient with all members of the patriarchal family, and especially with Sahak whose illustrious nobility exasperated her. But today the son of the Armenian High Priest was calling at such an unearthly time when the Mamikonian home was effervescing with a secret, anti-national and anti-Christian conspiracy . . .

It was still a few hours before time for dinner. The Lady's salon was already in complete readiness. The silken curtains of the windows and shelves were raised, revealing inside all the precious and costly utensils neatly arranged next to each other. The gold, the silver, and the bronze verily burned in their magnificent beauty. They included various beautifully-carved plates, trays, bowls, flasks, cups, and typical painted Armenian pitchers made of black and red clay. This outlay in their immobility served as an ornament, rather than a necessity for table use.

The entire salon was bathed in rose scent. The luxurious sofas, the rugs, the pillows, and everything was sprinkled with rose water. Freshly cut flowers, done in beautiful and costly vases, decorated the window sills.

Seated on her palatial luxurious sofa, Lady Mamikonian was viewing through the

open window the vast panorama which spread before her in the distance. From here, hidden in the thickness of the trees, one could perceive a part of the road which led to the Fortress from the Monastery of Ashtishat. Milady's turbulent eyes were fixed on that road. She awaited with profound anxiety the arrival of Sahak who was to traverse the path. She was also dreaming of the happy day when her beloved husband would appear on the same road, bringing in his train new fortune and exalted rank.

Near her sat another woman, younger in years, and more pretty. Innocence and affability dripped from the rosy lips of this lovely young woman. Her big black eyes were so filled with gentle sweetness that you would think they were a sea of goodness. On her forehead shone the Persian royal emblem, a half sun radiating golden rays. And as a matter of fact, she was a member of the Persian royal family, Vormizdoukht, the sister of Mighty Sapor. She was Vahan Mamikonian's second wife, and Samuel's step-mother.

That beautiful woman had won Samuel's heart, had won over Samuel's father to the Persian court and the religion, and finally, through that woman King Sapor had insured for himself a trusty ally and collaborator in the person of Vahan Mamikonian.

Polygamy had been a customary thing among the Armenian princes. Besides their lawful wives, they kept numerous concubines in their courts. Samuel's father had married Vormizdoukht after the unfortunate ending of Arshakavan when Nerses the Great had reconciled King Arshak with his rebellious princes, but Samuel's father and Meroujan Artzrouni were never reconciled with their king, and both having left the princes union, deserted their king, and surrendered themselves to Ctesiphon and King Sapor of Persia.



And today, the two ladies of the same House sat together on the same palatial sofa. Vormizdoukht, Samuel's step-mother, and Tadjatouhi, Samuel's own mother. They were two irreconcilable champions, two passionate women rivalling for their husband's affections, both mighty representatives of high origin and rank. Logically, Samuel's mother should have subordinated herself to her royal rival. Samuel's mother was the sister of Meroujan Artzrouni, while Vormizdoukht was King Sapor's sister. And yet, due to circumstances, this order had been reversed. Samuel's mother, that hard-hearted and haughty scion of the Artzrounis, taking advantage of Vormizdoukht's gentle and pliable disposition, not only had managed to preserve her superiority in rank, but had actually subjected the latter to her inflexible will. That explained why Vormizdoukht's presence was practically ignored by Samuel's mother who kept peering through the window at the road to Ash-tishat.

Lady Mamikonian was absorbed wholly in one thought which greatly disturbed her. Sahak's unexpected appearance in Taron had completely upset her thoughts. "He is coming ostensibly to inspect his estates," she mused, "what is the meaning of this? These lucky people, without the sword or without shedding blood, have acquired so many estates that they even cannot keep track of them all. Surely there must be a hidden purpose in Sahak's sudden visit at this time."

Vormizdoukht already was becoming restless. For a few moments she was amused at the antics of a stray swallow who slipped inside the open window, kept warbling as it circled the large salon, and after a number of flights, finally came to rest on top of a bronze head set on a pedestal of white marble. That was the bust of Mamkoun, the forefather of the Mamikonians. From his exalted height, this nature's darling

viewed with private curiosity his luxurious surroundings, as well as the faces of the two pensive women. Making nothing of it, he again flew away, executed a few flights and, continuing his warbling, he flitted out of the window.

Vormizdoukht had been invited this day as the guest of Samuel's mother. She had her own private mansion. She had occupied nearly one quarter of the fortress, together with her eunuchs and the multitude of servants, all of whom were Persians. When she had set out for Armenia, as a dowry, her brother had given her riches and a whole caravan of attendants. In addition, she acquired fruitful estates, villages and towns near the border of Assyria, on the banks of the Tigris. To dispel her ennui, at times she picked up the beautiful fan beside her, made of peacock's feathers held together in an ivory handle, and fanned her flushed face. During this operation, the coral beads of the bracelets on her bare arms made a pleasing jingle. Samuel's mother still kept looking through the window, and Vormizdoukht, to make her presence known, asked her:

—Is Sahak coming all alone?

—He is accompanied by Mesrop, his father's secretary, replied Lady Mamikonian, turning to her forgotten guest.

—I have never seen Mesrop, said Vormizdoukht.

—You will soon see him; he is a very handsome and attractive youth. Tadjatouhi put a special emphasis on the last two words which made Vormizdoukht blush. The two were speaking in Persian.

—Sahak is likewise a handsome youth, observed Vormizdoukht.

—More handsome than Mesrop, Tadjatouhi added with a bitter smile.

At this juncture Samuel entered. "Greetings, Vormizdoukht, greetings, mother," and saying it, he approached gracefully

and kissed first his mother's hand, and then Vormizdoukht's. His appearance at once dispelled the latter's boredom, to say nothing of the perceptible delight which lit her face.

—What happened to your guests? the mother asked with a significant accent.

Samuel took a few steps toward the window and looking at the sun clock on the opposite tower, said: "They're a bit late, it seems, but they'll soon be here." Then, changing the subject, "Aha, I understand now how much you love Sahak!"

—How so? his mother asked, suppressing her displeasure.

—I see your salon is all aglitter and you seem so impatient for Sahak's arrival.

His mother laughed. "But do you know, Samuel, that soon we shall perhaps have other guests? Why don't you sit down?"

—What guests? he asked.

—Don't you know, Samuel? the mother asked reproachfully.—You know very well that your father will be accompanied by two distinguished Persian generals, princes Tzik and Karen. No doubt they will be our guests while passing through Taron.

—I know that, dear mother, Samuel replied as he picked up Vormizdoukht's fan and began to twirl it between his fingers.—There's plenty of time yet, and still you seem to be in a hurry. Persian generals will not arrive so soon. By the time they enter the boundries of Taron, we shall have ample time to make fitting preparations for their welcome.

Milady accepted these words as sincere and replied,

—I, too, know that we have ample time to get ready, but you have no idea, Samuel, how poor-mannered our servants are. I have instructed them a thousand times what they should put here, what they should remove, and still they forget it. I have never entertained a distinguished guest without being chagrined.

—But Sahak is ours, mother dear, he is not a stranger that he should be so exacting.

—It's again Sahak, the mother interrupted impatiently, —Sahak, Sahak, Sahak! Who's thinking of Sahak?

—Ah, I forgot, it seems to me you spoke of the generals Tzik and Karen!

—Yes, the generals Tzik and Karen. Do you know, Samuel, who they are? What influence they have at the court of King Sapor?

At the constant repetition of the two names, Vormizdoukht innocently joined in the conversation:

—They are some secondary servants of my father. If they should come here they will not dare sit next to me.

—It's true, dear Vormizdoukht, Samuel replied with a sympathetic look at her beautiful face, —but when the hindmost servants of the Persian court call on us, we not only bring out our very best, but we hoist them on our shoulders.

Samuel's words did not offend Vormizdoukht but they deeply wounded his mother. She cast a fierce look, first at her son, and then at Vormizdoukht.

—You are not by any chance justifying the incompetence of my servants, are you, Samuel? This morning I had to expel four of them. Imagine such a very common thing as getting hold of a nightingale. I instructed them one by one, told them where to hang the cage, how to feed the bird. And lo and behold, what should I see? When this morning I entered the salon, I found the poor bird killed in its cage. It turned out that, instead of hanging the cage from the top, they had put it on the window sill, in easy reach of a cat's paws.

—That was very clumsy of them, Samuel shook his head sympathetically. —You had a right to expel not only four of them but all of them. But didn't you punish the cat?

—You're mocking me, Samuel. It's unseemly to mock in such matters. At least you should not offend Vormizdoukht.

Samuel turned to Vormizdoukht and asked: "Do you feel offended?"

Vormizdoukht smiled and, looking at Samuel from underneath her thick eyebrows, said: "No. There are many nightingales in your forests."

—But such a nightingale which had been warbling all day long, that does not happen once in a thousand, Vormizdoukht, interrupted Tadjatouhi with excitement.—You do not even understand the meaning of your religion and you endure Samuel's mockery. That's not good.

Vormizdoukht blushed.

The fact of the matter was that Samuel's mother was not such a sensitive woman as to fall for a nightingale's warble. There was a bit of religion involved. According to the faith of the Persians, each nightingale embodied the soul of a good angel, and consequently, each devotee of the Zoroastrian faith usually kept a nightingale in his home. In entering the Persian sacred bird into her home, Samuel's mother was displaying her initial act of sympathy with the Persian religion. And this exhibition of sympathy was necessary in view of the fact that soon she would be entertaining in her home the generals Tzik and Karen.

Samuel again turned to his step mother.

—And you, Vormizdoukht, what preparations have you made for the reception of your generals?

—I have made no preparations at all, replied this simple-minded Persian lady.

She knew nothing of the latest news from Ctesiphon. Samuel's mother had told her nothing. And Samuel thought of disclosing the news, to see their effect upon her.

—You must likewise make preparations, Vormizdoukht, he said to her, —I will now tell you a bit of very joyful news.

Vormizhoukht's face shone with expectant joy, as Lady Tadjatouhi frantically beckoned her son not to speak. But Samuel disregarded his mother and continued:

—Your brother, King Sapor, has given your younger sister Vormizdoukht to Meroujan Artzrouni in marriage. They have already set out from Ctesiphon and will soon be in Armenia, accompanied by my father.

—That's good news, exclaimed Vormizdoukht delightedly, holding Samuel's hands. —Then I shall surely see my little sister? Then they will surely be here soon?

—Of course you'll see your sister, as well as your new brother-in-law. They will be here any minute now. Besides, I have another surprise for you, Vormizdoukht, Samuel added while keeping his hand in hers.

—Is that a thing to say, Samuel? Think well before you speak, his mother broke in in Armenian which Vormizdoukht did not understand.

—Why not tell her? Why shouldn't she know that her husband (that is your husband and my father) is coming soon? Why shouldn't she know that her sister has been wedded to Meroujan? Why hide all these from her any longer? retorted Samuel, exceedingly excited.

—Because she hasn't the brains of a child. Because what she knows will be the property of the whole fortress in a minute.

—That is wrong. True, Vormizdoukht has the heart of a child, but she has the brains of a woman.

Vormizdoukht, who although unable to follow this exchange, rightly perceived that all was not well between mother and son, intervened saying: "Do not offend your mother, Samuel." Then, turning to the mother: "Aren't you glad that my sister is married to your brother?"

—How can I but be glad? replied Lady Mamikonian, somewhat relenting.—My joy has no bounds. Few are worthy of the

honor of being the son-in-law of the mighty Persian King.

—Then we should be grateful to Samuel for advising us to make preparations. I myself shall see to it that a royal reception will be awaiting both my sister and my new brother-in-law. How wonderful it will be to have them with us.

While uttering the last words, the beautiful young woman's face became even more rapturous, but Samuel's mother was still frowning, still worried lest her son go farther in his disclosures to Vormizdoukht whom she regarded as an inexperienced, simple-minded woman. All the sisters of King Sapor were called Vormizdoukht. As with the Armenians, this was also the custom with the Persians that the daughters of the court, although possessing a private name of their own, were always addressed by their paternal name. Thus, King Sapor's father's name was Vormizd, and consequently, his daughters were called Vormizdoukht which means the daughter of Vormizd. The Armenian King Sanatrouk's daughter was called Sandoukht, St. Vardan Mamikonian's daughter, Vardan-doukht, Sahak Parthev's (the High Priest) daughter, Sahak-anoush, and Sembat Bagratouni's daughter, Sembatouhi. Thus, Sapor's two sisters, one of whom had been given in marriage to Meroujan Artzrouni, were called Vormizdoukht after their father.

If not to swallow it up outright, to subordinate Armenia, the Persian court followed the policy of the Roman Empire. To win over Armenia Emperor Valentine had given one of his kinswomen, Olympia, to King Arshak in marriage. And now King Sapor, to retaliate, had given his two sisters to King Arshak's two most distinguished princes in marriage—Meroujan Artzrouni and Vahan Mamikonian—and thus had succeeded in raising them against their king. The domain of Artzrounis was the vast

country of Vaspourakan, that of the Mamikonian princes, the land of Taron. The former bordering on Azerbaijan, and the latter adjoining Assyria, both were close to the Persian border. Thus, through the instrumentality of his two sisters, King Sapor had opened two gates for his invasion of Armenia.

—Another bit of joyful news, Vormizdoukht, Samuel persisted, without heeding the manifest displeasure of his mother, —is that your sister will soon become the Queen of Armenia.

—Oh, how wonderful! exclaimed Vormizdoukht, and in her ecstasy she so far forgot herself that, like an innocent butterfly, flung herself on Samuel's neck and clung there, asking constantly: "Is it true? Is it true? Surely you are not joking, Samuel."

—I'm not joking, it's true.

Oh, how nice, how nice! Vormizdoukht warbled clapping her hands together, and then resuming her seat, she turned to Lady Mamikonian and asked:

—Isn't it wonderful?

—Of course it's wonderful, Lady Mamikonian replied, sharing the younger woman's joy.

Samuel rose to his feet, he paced the length of the salon several times, and finally, stopping before Vormizdoukht, said:

—It will be wonderful, Vormizdoukht; still you didn't seem to realize that there are a lot of things Meroujan must do before he attains to the throne of Armenia.

—Such as? Vormizdoukht was curious.

—I will tell you what all.

Lady Mamikonian again beckoned her son to keep silent.

—She must know it, and the success of what is to be done requires that she should know it, Samuel replied in Armenian. —Why do you forbid me to speak?

He walked to the window, and for a moment viewed the vast panorama before

him from that formidable height. Below, in the abysmal darkness, thundered the mighty Aratzani River which, twisting in the narrow confines of the Vahevanian Canyon, like an angry dragon, battered the rocky battlements at the base of the fortress. Opposite, on the other side of the river, stood the ruins of an ancient city which, according to tradition, was built by King Sanatrouk. That city was the capital of the Alkounis, namely the former rulers of Taron, which had been destroyed by Mamkoun, the ancestor of the Mamikonians. The thick woods had hidden the mighty relics of that mysterious city and through the centuries huge oak trees had shot up their peaks from among the semi-demolished turrets. At one time fire had wrought such havoc that the city was called Mtzourk. Samuel was gazing on it as on the extinguished ashes of a once mighty empire. He averted his gaze from this sad scene to take in the farther distance, where he could see the Hill of Avetiatz, with its beautiful orchard which hid the celebrated Monastery of Glak. It seemed as if the lame demon of Gregory the Illuminator was still alive there, and the ashes which smouldered in the fireplaces of the Monastery were still being drained underneath the ground into the waves of the Aratzani. Here at the Monastery of Glak still reposed the tombs of Samuel's ancestors. It seemed to Samuel that, from amid these imposing tombs were emerging the grim ghosts of the great deceased, staring at the Fortress of Voghakan with angry faces, where a conspiracy unworthy of the name of Mamikonians was in the offing. . . . Amid sad meditations, averting his gaze from the Monastery of Glak, Samuel turned to his right where he could see the Paradise of Hatziatz through whose magnificent thick trees he could scarcely espy the cross-shaped dome of the church which his ancestors had built, near the Monastery of Ashtishat.

He turned to his step-mother and said:

"Come here, Vormizdoukht."

Vormizdoukht lightly tripped to his side and snuggled against him, inside the bay window. Samuel's mother looked at them with profound displeasure.

—I will tell you now, Vormizdoukht, what all Meroujan must do in order to attain to the throne of Armenia. But to enable him to accomplish all this, we must help him, and especially you, Vormizdoukht.

He pointed a hand toward the Paradise of Hatziatz.

—Do you see, dear Vormizdoukht, how beautiful is yonder under the brilliant rays of the sun? The sun god, with its divine warmth, has given life to that wondrous paradise. When the wind blows, the soft tree tops, like wavelets of gentle green, swish and sway like a huge green sea, extending themselves to the tip of the horizon. In the thick, shadowy silence of these trees stand the temples which the Mamikonians have built. My ancestors poured in there their entire wealth, adorning the holy altar of those temples with the most precious and costly articles in the world. Several hundred monks, fed by our bread, daily pray there for the souls of their benefactors.

—Now we Mamikonians are going to destroy these temples, dear Vormizdoukht, and will replace them with Persian temples of fire worship. Let that holy paradise be filled with acrid smoke and soot, let that beautiful orchard be consumed with fire and turn to ashes in the eternal flames of Zoroastrianism. Let the sweet scent of Christian incense and myrrh give way to the stench of fly-ridden sacrifices of the Persian Magi. Let the tiresome toll of the bells be silenced forever, and let each morning, at sunrise, on these wondrous heights, be heard the shrill sound of the Magi's trumpet and drum, and let the devout Armenian peasant, hearing those sounds, ascend with palpitating heart to the top, and worship the rising and setting sun. Do you hear, dear Vormizdoukht,



that's what your brother demands, and that's what Meroujan must do if he will be king of the Armenians . . .

But Vormizdoukht had not been listening at all. Completely wrapped up in her sweet self-forgetfulness, her hand resting on the youth's shoulder, and clinging to him, she only heard the music of his sweet voice, intoxicated with his breath, and whenever he made the slightest movement, such as pointing to this or that object, the beautiful young woman's childish heart palpitated with the fury of a foaming sea.

But Samuel's mother had been listening. "Enough, Samuel," she shouted, arousing Samuel from his deep reverie.

—You are mocking, Samuel, she repeated, —think well about your behavior. Go away, Vormizdoukht.

—Ah, why do you take my enthusiasm for mockery, dear mother, said Samuel as he withdrew from the window. —I am not altogether mocking. I am telling what you want me to tell.

Vormizdoukht, likewise aggrieved, left the bay window, reluctantly parting with her brief company with Samuel. She directed her steps toward the door of the salon, without looking at her host.

—Where are you going, Vormizdoukht? Samuel asked.

—I am not feeling very well, I have a headache, I must go rest awhile.

She rushed out of the room, leaving behind her fan which she had placed on Milady's sofa. Samuel took the fan and ran after her. He stopped her at the ante-chamber.

—Thank you, Samuel, the stepmother said as she took her fan, but her sad face was again lit with a joyful smile.

—Aren't you coming to dinner? asked Samuel.

—No.

—Sahak wanted to see you.

—Kindly offer him my apologies.

She stepped out. Two black eunuchs were waiting for her at the ante-chamber. They led her to her quarters. Returning to the salon, Samuel said to his mother:

—You have offended Vormizdoukht.

—I cannot stand the sight of such Persian lewdness in my court, replied his mother.

—But you love everything which is Persian.

—But think, Samuel, she is your father's wife.

—And she is my esteemed mother. If you speak so unseemly of her again I will leave this room and never again enter this salon.

Lady Mamikonian did not reply. Her son's threat silenced her. Woman's tears, especially a mother's tears at such a moment were the most effective reply. She took her kerchief to her eyes and began to sob bitterly.

Deeply disturbed, shaking with fury, Samuel circled the room like a floundering man and paid no attention to his mother's tears. He was still tingling with the delicious touch of this charming Persian woman, and her last words were still echoing in his ears. That young woman who was scarcely twenty was very dear to Samuel, especially because the role which she was assigned to play, and because of whom his father had joined her family, she not only was defaulting, but she actually despised it.

Education in the Persian court being confined to the males, the girls generally were illiterate, and learned only those necessary forms and ceremonies which were peculiar to the easy, luxurious life of the harem. That was the reason why Persian women were entirely unsuited for the demands and the exactions of political missions. They served solely as a mechanical link between their husbands and the courts. Consequently, Samuel's long dissertation at the window was nothing but a means of sounding Vormizdoukht's reactions, her sympathy or

aversion toward the actions of her brother. As a Persian woman and a heathen, the contemplated plans and plottings of her father and the Armenian princes should have interested her, but she did not even pay any attention to them. The role expected of her was really being played by Samuel's mother, and that's what exasperated the son all the more.

There was a sound of trumpets. Samuel

was shaken, so was his mother. The latter wiped her eyes and peered out of the window. Samuel joined her. There was a large cavalcade on the road to the fortress from the Monastery of Ashtishat. Their arms and decorations shone in the sun. When they approached the fortress, they sounded the trumpets. Samuel went out to welcome his august guests.

## Chapter XII.

### An Unsuccessful Conspiracy

The appearance of the guests interrupted the unexpected quarrel which had broken out between mother and son. Lady Mamikonian resumed her customarily haughty mien, and after Samuel's exit, started to pace restlessly the length of the salon until the guests should enter in and kiss her hand. But the latter were late. She sent for her chamberlain. Presently, there entered in a courtier of middle height, he was the factotum of the Mamikonian house and the steward of the Dining Hall. Bowing low, he stood at the entrance of the salon.

—Is everything ready, Armenak?

—Everything is ready, Madame, replied the custodian.

—Have all the musicians been notified?

—They have, Madame.

—Order the keeper of the wine to bring out the oldest and the most potent wines for the guests.

—It has been ordered, Madame.

—And the mildest for me, do you understand?

—I understand, Madame.

—Only let there be no discrimination in the colors.

—There will be none, Madame.

After a few minor instructions, she said, "Now you may go." The custodian left.

After the departure of the custodian, there entered the chief-of-eunuchs Bacchus, with

a withered, beardless face, and snake-like eyelids which held with difficulty his protruding, froglike restless pupils. With obsequious humility which is the characteristic of the tale-bearer, he cringingly approached the divan, tiptoeing softly as if afraid his steps would betray him, and leaning forward, throatily muttered:

—They have gone to kiss the hand of Lady Zarouhi.

Lady Mamikonian's eyes were aflame with fury hearing these words.

—Then what? she asked in a troubled voice.

—Then, they will come here for dinner.

—When?

—Who knows? They might come soon if Lady Zarouhi does not delay them. But her habits are well known. She will not let them leave until they have eaten and drunk something.

—Did Samuel, too, go with them?

—Samuel was at the head of the procession.

Lady Mamikonian was still more disturbed. Convinced that he had achieved his aim, the eunuch carried his tale-bearing a step further, saying,

—Samuel ordered that Mushegh too should be invited to dinner here.

—Did Mushegh agree to come?

—He did. He is like this with Samuel.

In saying this, the eunuch put his two index-fingers together as a sign of complete unity.

The families of the three Mamikonian brothers—Vardan, Vasak and Vahan—who lived within the same fortress, although outwardly friendly, were nevertheless at bitter enmity with one another internally. And this inveterate enmity had its disastrous causes. Vasak had killed his own brother Vardan, whereas Vahan, Samuel's father, had betrayed Vasak to King Sapor, thus bringing about his death. It was a case of blood feud, smouldering deeply, and driving the three brothers to successive acts of revenge.

But this deep-rooted vendetta was cloaked by a false politeness of the nobility. Lady Mamikonian was disturbed not so much because Samuel had invited Mushegh, the son of Vasak, to dinner, but rather by that bit of information supplied by the eunuch that Sahak Parthev had first gone to kiss Lady Zarouhi's hand. That lady in mourning was Vardan Mamikonian's widow, the man who had been slain by Vasak. And Sahak, as has been noted before, was the son of Vardan's daughter. That was the reason why, every time Sahak had occasion to visit the fortress of his cousins, he usually first called on Lady Zarouhi to offer her his respects and to comfort her. And that sorely exasperated Lady Mamikonian. "Whenever this haughty Parthian appears in our fortress, he makes it a point deliberately to insult me," she muttered with trembling thick lips.

—Did you find out anything about Vormizdoukht? she asked the eunuch.

—She is ill.

—Then she'll not come to dinner?

—She would not come even if she were well, replied the eunuch, with a sly smile which on his wrinkled face looked more like a grimace than a smile. But Lady Mamikonian's face was literally illuminated at the

news of Vormizdoukht's absence from dinner. That beautiful, gentle, charming woman might cast a spell on the young guests which would be ruinous to her popularity and authority. Envy had no bounds in the heart of this proud Artzrouni, although she had already passed the prime of her life and was beginning to wither.

During this clandestine conversation between the eunuch and Lady Mamikonian, the door of the salon occasionally moved ever so imperceptibly, as two shining eyes peered through the crevice. Someone in the antechamber was spying on them. Lady Mamikonian had been as much disturbed by the information supplied by the eunuch as she had been overjoyed. Her heart was a stormy sea, and dark thoughts and contemplations made her head dizzy. The untimely arrival of this unwanted guest had left her no time to rearrange her thoughts and to formulate a clear-cut plan of action. And now she was swaying between two terrible extremes. She again turned to her tale-bearer:

—Do you know definitely that Mushegh will be at dinner?

The eunuch's face was again lit with that repulsive smile, as his restless, frog-like pupils began to roll,

—If your humble servant is not sure of a thing, he does not say it; —and saying it, the eunuch ever so tenderly straightened a pillow on the divan which had been dislodged.

The door of the salon again moved, and two shining eyes peered through the small opening. Apparently those searching eyes had difficulty in locating the conversant of Milady because the sofa on which Lady Mamikonian was seated was exactly opposite the entrance of the salon, while the latter was so large that only indistinct echoes of the voices reached the antechamber. Lady Mamikonian rose to her feet and directed her steps toward the adjoining room. "Come

with me, Bacchus," she commanded the eunuch.

That neatly furnished room was Lady Mamikonian's private chamber, connected by a door to her bed room, while another entrance led to a small yard behind the women's quarters, always decorated with evergreen plants.

They locked the door of the private chamber from inside. The salon was now vacant. Just then, cautiously tiptoed inside the salon the listener of the antechamber, Miss Nevart. Like caution personified, hopping over the soft luxurious rugs with light steps, and carefully scanning her surroundings, she approached the flower pots on the window sills, took a whiff, walked over to the metal mirror and scanned her pale face, then she tiptoed to the door through which Milady and the eunuch had entered. Only inarticulate mutterings could be heard from inside. Putting her ear against the keyhole, the young woman almost stopped breathing lest she spoil her hearing. She could only hear dim and indistinct whisperings of which she could make neither head nor tail. The unpleasantness of her situation was nearly choking her. By some dark, sinister instinct, she felt here was being concocted a vile plot which terrified her.

She left her position in search of some object which she could offer as an excuse should she be surprised by her Lady. At that instant, the doors of the salon opened with a resounding noise and in plunged little Vahan—Samuel's younger brother. Freely perspiring from his long playing, his cheeks rosy red, the rollicking youngster ran to the young woman, embraced her, and after receiving a kiss, left her and bounced on the sofa. In the twinkling of an eye he gathered the pillows, piled them on one another, and riding it, he started to lash his steed with his hands, shouting, "Giddup, giddup." But when he saw that his clumsy

steed did not move, he soon got tired, and dismounting his horse he started to look for some other toy. He had seized a bunch of flowers from one of the vases when the young woman rushed in to recover it, but in the ensuing scuffle the flowers were quite manhandled. Finally, the young woman seized the child and forcibly dragging him out of the salon, locked the door behind him. After a few exasperated kicks at the door, the child went away.

While Vahan's mischief had cost the young woman a few precious moments, still it provided for her a godsent excuse. She reset the two pillows in their places, picked up the bunch of flowers, shook them loose, plucked the petals and scattered them all over the rugs. After these operations she again approached the entrance of the private room and put her ear to the key hole. They were talking in a lower voice now. And although her entire body was tense, the poor girl could hear nothing. Her heart was pounding from curiosity, and her cheeks were flushed from her rising temperature. It would explain a lot of things if she only could discover who was the conversant of her Lady. The door not being tightly closed, there was a slight aperture at the lower end. She stooped down and peered through the opening. Still she could see nothing. After a few moments there was the sound of an uninterrupted coughing, which gradually was intensified then slowly subsided, ending in a choking gurgle. The girl was shaken. That involuntary cough was familiar to her, as well as all the inmates of the fortress. It emerged from a shattered chest and decayed lungs. Now she knew who was talking with her Lady. "There's something cooking here," she thought, and listened with all the more tenseness.

Suddenly she turned pale, like one who sees the lightning strike, and hears the mighty roar of thunder. But what she

heard were only two words: one was Mushegh's name, the other was too terrible a word to utter . . . There was a profound silence in the private chamber. Now you could not even hear the former whisperings. It seemed that Milady's accomplice, after having received his last instructions, had made his exit from the other door which led to the women's quarters.

The girl hurriedly left her ambush fearing her Lady might suddenly come out and catch her in the act of snooping. She walked over to the entrance of the salon which she had locked, opened the door, then got busy picking the scattered petals on the rugs. There was enough work to keep her busy should Lady Mamikonian appear. But she was late in coming. It seemed she was still being tortured by the cruel order which she had issued to her faithful servant. The girl picked up the flowers, the leaves, and the petals several times, then she again broke them into small fragments and scattered them anew on the carpets. She was in the midst of this act when Lady Mamikonian appeared on the scene.

—What's all that? Who did that? she asked, looking around her with angry eyes.

—Who do you think? the girl continued to pick the fragments,—I come in and what should I see? Vahan had turned everything topsy-turvy. When he saw me he ran away.

—Ahk, that little devil, exclaimed the exasperated mother. —When will that child ever come to his senses? The guests may come in any minute now and see this entire disorder!

—I will immediately clean up the mess, Milady, the girl replied, as she continued her work all the more vigorously.

—It'll be noon by the time you finish it, go tell one of the servants to come here at once, while you get to the garden and pick a fresh bunch of flowers.

Nevart rushed out with haste.

The servants were already assembled at the dining room, laughing, chortling, and cracking jokes as they made the table ready. Young Housik, Nevart's lover, was among the company. Nevart called one of the servants and told him Milady's orders, while she rushed to the garden. When Housik saw her, his eyes began to shine and he followed her, all the more because that cunning girl had taken her hand to her right ear in parting. That was an agreed sign between the two, indicating that she had something important to impart to him. To avoid the notice of his companions, Housik lingered for a few moments, then cautiously left the dining room. Taking a round-about way, he finally met her in the garden. He found his beloved near the rose bushes, but not in such a gay mood as he was accustomed to see her at this rendezvous. She had just begun to cut the roses.

—It looks like those are for me, the lad said as he approached to embrace her.

—Not now, Housik, and the girl stretched a restraining hand. —I have called you for a bit of very important business.

—What business? the young man asked obviously hurt. This was the first time he had seen such coldness in his beloved.

—Go at once to Samuel and give him to understand somehow to stop Mushegh from coming to Milady's dinner today. Now go quick.

The tone of her voice made Housik forget his amorous mood. He was astonished.

—Why shouldn't Prince Mushegh come to dinner? he asked, —what's happened?

—Something terrible has happened, I'll tell you everything later. Now go.

—Don't you think the Master should know what has happened so he may warn Prince Mushegh accordingly?

—If your Master learns it now, it won't be so good, dear Housik, there may be trouble, the girl persisted convincingly.—Let the guests go to dinner. I will tell you



everything and then you can tell your Master. Now go, don't delay longer.

Housik kissed the girl's hand, then rushed out of the garden.

Inside the dining room the orchestra was playing the enchanting song of King Artashes. Two popular minstrels, standing at the entrance, were singing to the accompaniment of their ancient instruments. The song was old, so were the singers. King Artashes had sung that song on his death bed. That patriotic king, during the last moments of his life, had yearned so passionately to have one last look at the celebrations which were taking place on the first morning of the Festival of Navasard. Three hundred years had elapsed since then. And now, in this Christian era, the same heathen minstrel was singing the song which had been written on a death bed.

In the center of the dining room was a huge stationary table of solid marble. It was a rectangular table, stretched so long that it could accomodate fifty people on both sides. And yet, only five persons were seated on the beautiful, sculptured seats which lined the two sides of the table. At the head, seated on a sumptous chair, was Lady Mamikonian herself. To her right was Sahak Parthev, while to her left, Mesrop Mashtotz. Next to Sahak was seated Samuel, and next to him, old Arpak, Samuel's tutor. The missing guests were Prince Mushegh, Samuel's cousin, and Lady Vornizdoukht.

The table was piled with a variety of roasts and choice cutlets. Tall silver platters were loaded with various kinds of hors d'oeuvres, appetizers, and relishes, as well as preserves, sweetstuffs, and dried fruits. The entire table was embellished with colorful flowers and green leaves. Behind each guest was stationed a magnificently clad youth wearing a floral crown. These youths held in one hand a silver pitcher filled with wine, and in the other hand a silver goblet

which looked like a small bowl. They were the guests' butlers, one for each guest. But a little farther, behind each guest, was likewise stationed an armed guard who, like an angel watched over the safety of his master.

Stationed at the entrance of the dining room, the two minstrels kept singing to the accompaniment of their instruments. One of these was blind in both eyes like Homer, the other was lame in one leg. They were poorly dressed. The darlings of the common people were in their element in the presence of the princes. The sound of the plaintive song, the melody of the instruments, and the clink of golden forks against the platter were drowning the conversation which was slowly becoming animated. Only Samuel remained silent. Bitter, soul-exhausting thoughts were rocking his heart. Two individuals who were dearest to his heart, for one reason or other, had not joined the dinner—Prince Mushegh, and Lady Vornizdoukht.

Lady Mamikonian was carrying the brunt of the conversation which was chiefly confined to Sahak Parthev. Generally a competent conversationalist in the presence of guests, her conversation today was desultory and disconnected. She was being tortured by the thought lest Samuel might have revealed to her guests of the impending return of his father from Ctesiphon, and if he had done so, just in what manner he had presented the situation. The guests themselves did not broach the subject and Milady did her best to avoid the topic. But to be entirely silent was likewise inappropriate. She had intended to send Samuel in the near future to meet his father before he entered the boundary of Taron. The news would surely leak out, and these guests who were close relatives of the family would get wind no matter how hard she tried to conceal it. Besides, Samuel surely would inform them. On the other hand, she had not yet come

to a definite understanding with Samuel as to the precise manner of divulging the news to the public, or what form the reception would take. Mushegh's mysterious failure to appear at dinner was another item which tortured her mind. Could it be that there were spies in her household? Could the eunuch Bacchus have conspired against her? After he had given her his promise, could he have secretly warned Mushegh? "If Mushegh was warned, the consequences will be serious," she thought, as she hid her inner anxiety with a cloak of outward cheerfulness. In the execution of her sinister plot, she feared no one more than this bold, fearless youth.

Only a firm constitution like Lady Mamikonian's could, after all these dark apprehensions, have prevented a complete breakdown and enabled her to maintain a cold front as she did under the circumstances. Her situation was nevertheless still exceedingly precarious. She did not know how she would come out of this tangled mess. For awhile she tried to divert the conversation on more remote topics. She tried several times to express in various forms her sorrow and sympathy for the exile of Sahak's father, Nerses the Great.

—I have had no peace nor rest, she began to sob, ever since the day I received the sad news, and every time I think of it my eyes are filled with tears. The land of the Armenians is without a shepherd, without a High Priest! Akh! What a tragedy!

And she actually took her handkerchief to her eyes, but Sahak comforted her, saying:

—Rest easy, Madame, do not torture your heart with such bitter recollections. My father has encountered many such hazards in his life, and every time the Lord has saved him. He will come out safely from this peril, too.

—Yes, he will be saved, repeated Lady Mamikonian, assuming a more cheerful mien. His holy prayers will save him.

Parthev changed the subject, asking:

—And you, dear Auntie, what news have you received of my uncle? I do not know just where, but I heard somehow that he is coming home in a few days.

Lady Mamikonian was taken aback, but she immediately controlled herself, as she replied:

—They say he is coming but exact information is still lacking. It seems, as if in punishment of our sins, all the highways are closed. Failure is the word on every hand, there's nothing comforting. What is taking place there in Ctesiphon? What has happened to the Armenian King? No one knows. A few days ago there was a stranger from Ctesiphon, likely a deserter from the army, who brought the news that your uncle is coming. He brought neither letters nor any other sign. I have a suspicion that he deceived me for the sake of a present. What do you think, dear Sahak? I am so confused and don't know what to do.

—I do not think the stranger would dare deceive you, dear auntie. Did he say where he came from?

—He said he came from one of our villages.

—Then there's nothing to doubt, your peasants will never deceive you.

—I too am inclined to think he was perhaps right and I am making preparations to send Samuel to meet him.

—By all means, by all means, Sahak reassured her with a specious show of happiness, then turning toward the others, as if to generalize this pseudo-intimate conversation:

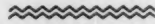
—Hear, hear, Mesrop, my uncle is coming and Samuel will go to meet him. Let's drink this one to Samuel's happy trip.

Mesrop was deeply absorbed in his jokes with old Arpak and did not hear Sahak's toast, but the latter repeated his proposal.

—Let's drink, drink, shouted Mesrop, and turning to the musicians, Sing us a new song.

The two troubadours started to sing the golden mansion of Astghik on top of Mount  
 song of Vahagn, the night he visited the Astghonitz.

*(To be continued)*



# BOOKS AND AUTHORS

H. KURDIAN, Reviewer

CANONES APOSTOLICI IN ARMENIAN, with Latin translations. Edited with critical notes by Father Hemaiyak Ghedighian. San Lazzaro, Venice, Italy. 1941. Large 80, paperbound, pp. 122.

A most important publication on Armenian ecclesiastic law. Father Ghedighian gives us in this publication a critical Armenian text of Apostolic Canones with a translation in Latin in the opposite column, thus rendering the material accessible to foreign scholars who are not familiar with the Armenian language.

The book is published by the Order of S. Congregazione Per La Chiesa Orientale Codificazione Canonica Orientale as source material *Fonti Serie II — Fascicolo XXI Collectio Canonum Ecclesiae Armeniae*.

The editor informs us in his "Pro Introductione" that the real Introduction will be published in a separate volume. He states that, until this publication, no material in Armenian, or any other language, dealing with this subject existed. Although some attempts had been made as early as 1903, these were incomplete in text, and lacked both critical and scientific approach.

Father Ghedighian asserts that the canones collected by Hovhanness Otznetsi was considered the first book in this line compiled in Armenian. Unfortunately, this original compilation has not reached us. Since 1094 A.D., this work has undergone some additions, as well as some abridgements or elaborations.

Although Armenian canonical manuscripts have no regular divisions, Father Ghedighian prefers to adopt one of its own with following sections:

- A. Apostolic Canones.
- B. Canones of Universal and Local meetings.
- C. Canones of foreign Holy Fathers.
- D. Canones of Armenian Holy Fathers' Meetings.
- E. Additional canones in canonical manuscripts or omitted in them.

For his text he has used the oldest canonical Armenian manuscript now in the manuscript collection of Amenaprgich Monastery in Julfa, Ispahan, Iran. This manuscript is dated 1098 A.D. He has also made use of manuscripts Nos. 274 (1285 A.D.), 583, 468, 1235, 776, 345, 73, 257, 472 (all with unknown dates), 1177 (1668 A.D.), 451 (1614 A.D.), all of them from the collection of the Mekhitarist Congregation of St. Lazzaro, Venice, Italy. Also, No. 60 of Berg. Arm. of Vatican Library dated 1634 A.D.

It is very unfortunate that Father Ghedighian could not utilize the Armenian canonical manuscripts of other monastic, public or private collections which indeed are quite numerous. Nevertheless, the present publication edited with great ability and with most important *scholia* is a valuable edition to Armenian research study.

THE ARMENIAN BOOK AND THE ART OF PRINTING, by Garegin Levonian, Erivan, USSR. Cloth, 80, illustrated, pp. 256. Price 20 rubles.

A fairly interesting book on the history of Armenian printing from its beginning (1512) until the 20th century, in Armenian. The author, in short, few notes, speaks of Armenian books in general. He states that there are about 30,000 Armenian manuscripts which, without doubt, is an exaggeration. The number of Armenian manuscripts all over the world could not exceed the 20,000 mark, including many written in the 19th century. The author evidently had no access to the material in Armenian that has been published during the past 30 years outside of the USSR. There are many errors in the book. The author is ignorant of the fact that as early as 1498 the Venetian printer-publisher Democrito Teracina had received permission to print in Armenian. The initials cut in woodcuts of biblical illustrations of Vosgan Vartabed's Bible, printed in Amsterdam, are not C.S. as author Levonian states, but C.V.S., which stands for Christoffel van Sichen. (See my illustrated article ARMENIAN WOODCUTS in THE PRINT COLLECTORS QUARTERLY, Vol. 27, No. 1, February, 1940).

Levonian's work unfortunately has also omitted valuable additions and essential information published by Armenian scholars outside the USSR. For this the author is perhaps to be pardoned, because books and periodicals printed outside of the USSR are not commonly accessible to Armenian authors in USSR, unless of course when the author is *persona grata*.

The paper, the cuts, and the printing of this book are of poor quality, — obviously the stock standard for books of more or less value, published in Erivan. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the book still stands as the best of its kind. However, it would be useless to recommend the book to readers, because, like all other desirable works published in the Armenian capital, it is not accessible to the outsider unless he is either a favored or fortunate person.

BIBLIOGRAPHIE DE L'ARMENIE, by A. Salmasian, Paris, 1946, 160, paperbound, pp. 196. Price 300 French francs.

Mr. A. Salmasian strives to furnish a most important bibliography now needed in Armenian literature. Naturally, no matter how hard he exerts himself, it is beyond the ability of one man to furnish a complete bibliography of works in all languages on or about Armenia and the Armenians. His try, although commendable, falls far short of his goal. Hundreds of book titles are not included in his list, even such notable works as *Travels of Evliya Effendi*, *Ibn Batuta*, *Clavijo*, *Caterino Zeno*, *Contarini*, *Chardin*, *Hanway*, etc. — their various editions and translations. In the absence of another, the work nevertheless is better than nothing at all. Perhaps a later edition, or even editions, will complete this deficiency, offering Armenian research students a more useful guide.

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THE BULLETIN OF THE BYZANTINE INSTITUTE.  
Published by The Byzantine Institute, Inc., Paris,  
146, 40, paperbound, pp. 108, and XXXVIII plates.

A most valuable publication by the great Byzantine Institute. Includes "The Treasure of Nagy-Szent-Miklos" by N. O. Kondakov. Also "L'Eglise Rouge de Perustica" by A. Frolow, an able and versatile Byzantologist. Next, "The Basilic of Belovo", by A. Grabar and William Emerson. Then "An Early Christian Basilica at Mesembria" by Ivan Velkov, "The First Dome of St. Sophia and its Building" by Kenneth John Conant, "Sainte Marthe ou la Mere de Dieu?", again by Frolow. This volume contains a most valuable "Bibliography of the History of Bulgarian Art (1931-1938)". The plates executed with great care in black and white or in color are of unquestionable value.

The materials presented in this issue naturally could be very useful for the research of Armenian architecture and allied arts. The director of the Institute, Mr. Thomas Whittemore, in the forward of this issue informs us that the next issue of the Bulletin will contain studies relating to the art of the Copts in Upper Egypt which no doubt will be anticipated with great interest. The Coptic arts also have a great deal in common with early Armenian Christian arts of illustration, illumination, architecture, murals etc.





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